Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah

Edited by
Hans M. Barstad
and Reinhard G. Kratz

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This Volume is Dedicated to William Johnstone,
Professor Emeritus of Hebrew and Semitic Languages in
the University of Aberdeen,
for his Lifelong and Distinguished Service to
Scottish Old Testament and Hebrew Bible Studies

PREFACE

This volume contains the proceedings of a Symposium 'Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah', arranged by the *Edinburgh Prophecy Network* in the School of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh, 11-12 May 2007. Prophetic studies are undergoing radical changes at the moment. The Edinburgh network has been created in order to coordinate some of the high quality research that is being done worldwide in this highly important area. Here, alternative methods and approaches to the study of prophecy should be opted for, including the different approaches of diachronic and synchronic analysis. The present editors (one working above all with final form approaches, the other more diachronically inclined), take a rather pragmatic attitude towards the question of methods. There is no such thing as 'one method', but the kind of method that one should apply depends solely upon what is to be investigated. Prophetic texts from the whole Hebrew Bible have to be taken into consideration. Equally important is the increased knowledge of ancient Near Eastern prophecy.

The first meeting of the *Edinburgh Prophecy Network* could not have been arranged without the help and assistance of numerous people. The editors are grateful to those of our colleagues who were willing to come to Edinburgh in 2007 and participate in the conference. The meeting gathered specialists in Jeremiah studies from Denmark, Finland, Germany, The Netherlands, United Kingdom and USA, who spoke on a variety of aspects of the book of Jeremiah. As one can see from the list of contributors, there is an intended balance between young and senior scholars. This is a policy that we intend to follow also in future meetings.

Particular thanks go to our honorary chairs William Johnstone and Robert Gordon who had a most difficult task. Since the majority of the papers were delivered in 10 minutes, followed by 5 minutes 'discussion', a very strict time keeping was essential. Both chairs run the programme like clockwork, with that rare gift of displaying at the same time erudition, grace, wit, and decisiveness, thus contributing considerably to the success of the meeting. A particular thank goes to our Edinburgh colleagues in Hebrew and Old Testament studies, Graeme Auld, Timothy Lim, and David Reimer, all members of *the Edinburgh Prophecy Network*. Each and every one of them supported the meeting from an

early stage of the planning process and they were always encouraging and enthusiastic.

An array of helpers behind the scenes is essential when a function like this takes place. Among the several New College staff and students that have been engaged in the arrangements, we can only mention a few. The School Administrator, Ms. Janice Barbour, was always accommodating, and helped with necessary formalities and permissions that always come up in today's bureaucratic jungle. Dr. Jessie Paterson, Computing Officer in New College, was vital in the setting up of the web site for the network, and she was always available for consultation throughout the planning process. During the whole of 2007, an Edinburgh student (now Dr.) David M. Allen, did an excellent job with the creating, and updating of the web page for the Jeremiah meeting. Another Edinburgh student, Ms. Hannah Brooks, not only looked after us during coffee breaks, but she also prepared and served delicious lunches. Finally, The New College servitor, Mr. Robert McKay, always obliging, helped us in various ways far beyond the call of duty.

We are further grateful to the editors of the Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, J. Barton, C.-L. Seow and M. Witte, for accepting this publication in their distinguished series. Last, but not least, our heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Anja Klein from the Theological Faculty of Göttingen University, who transformed all the manuscripts into a book. As a prophecy scholar in her own right (she has published an important study on inner-biblical interpretation in the Book of Ezekiel), Dr. Klein is a perfect copy editor, combining scholarly insight with accuracy. Thanks are also due to Mr. Andrei Popescu for his assistance with proof-reading and indexing.

Since the initiative for the prophecy network originated in Scotland, it gives us great pleasure to dedicate this volume to William Johnstone, who has meant so much Scottish Old Testament studies throughout his career.

Edinburgh and Göttingen, June 2009
Hans M. Barstad and Reinhard G. Kratz

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Jeremiah-Manasseh-Samuel
Significant Triangle? Or Vicious Circle?

GRAEME AULD

A relationship established

The relationship between Jeremiah, Manasseh, and Samuel can be clearly illustrated in two different ways, first of all in three parallel lines:

1 Sam 3:11	הנה אנכי עשׂה דבר בישׂראל	אשׁר כל־שׁמעו תצלינה שׁתי אזניו
2 Kgs 21:12	הנני מביא רעה על־ירושׁלם ויהודה	אשׁר כל־שׁמעיו תצלנה שׁתי אזניו
Jer 19:3	הנני מביא רעה על־המקום הזה	אשׁר כל־שׁמעה תצלנה אזניו

In 1 Sam 3, Yahweh informs Samuel of the impending fate of the priestly house of Eli. 2 Kgs 21 reports Yahweh speaking through his servants the prophets of the disaster threatening Jerusalem because of the awfulness of Manasseh's actions. And the threat uttered by Jeremiah, and reinforced by the piece of pottery in his hand about to be symbolically smashed, is generally understood to be directed jointly against kings of Judah and 'inhabitants' of Jerusalem. However, ישׁבי ירושׁלם could equally mean 'those enthroned in Jerusalem'.

Be that as it may, it is the second half of each line which establishes the bond between the three: this reaction of the ears of every hearer is found only in these three biblical passages. Any three points define a triangle, provided they are not in a straight line; but not all triangles are very interesting. Was this expression using the verb צלל in common use[1] in ancient Israel, but only happened to crop up three times in the writings which have survived? Or is this linkage more significant? We should observe immediately that the threat sentences in Jeremiah and Kings are closer to each other than either is to the version in Samuel.

1 SH. BAR-EFRAT, Das erste Buch Samuel, BWANT 176, Stuttgart, 2007, 100.

Not only do they share מביא רעה[2], but Jeremiah introduces Yahweh's threat as being directed against 'the kings of Judah and inhabitants/ enthroned ones of Jerusalem'. Again, we should not overplay the significance of the lack of שתי in Jeremiah MT[3] (the normally shorter LXX attests it), nor the doubly ungrammatical שׁמעיו in Kings MT[4] which, though secondary, probably results from accidental corruption (LXX does not attest it). Then in Jeremiah and Samuel, the divine threat is transmitted by an individual, but in Kings by the generality of Yahweh's 'servants the prophets'.

Samuel and Jeremiah, as presented in the books which bear their names, share several features which are unusual elsewhere:
a. Alone of the Latter Prophets, Jeremiah was styled נער at his call, like Samuel at his; and both received the divine summons before their birth.
b. Jeremiah is the only book of the Latter Prophets to mention Shiloh (7:12, 14; 26:6, 9; 41:5), or indeed the ark of the covenant (3:16); and both of these play an important part in the opening chapters of Samuel.
c. Apart from Chronicles and Ps 99, Samuel is found outside his own book only in Jer 15:1.

And it is precisely Jer 15:1 which brings us to the second, and more secure, way of presenting the triangle. King Manasseh appears outside the narratives about David's successors in Kings and Chronicles only in Jer 15:4. (Although the juxtaposition of Samuel and Manasseh can be presumed to be significant, that does not imply that the paragraph in which both feature (15:1-4) was an original unit.) After what Manasseh had done in Jerusalem, it would take more than a Moses or a Samuel, even with their intercessory reputation – and by implication more than Jeremiah too – to turn Yahweh back to their people. If it is possible to state this triangular relationship of Jeremiah, Manasseh, and Samuel in two different ways, it can hardly be denied that it really exists. However, in corroboration there are some further recurring and overlapping links. a. Yahweh's 'servants the prophets' make five appearances in 2 Kings and five in Jeremiah. Their last two appearances in 2 Kings relate explicitly to Manasseh (21:10; 24:2), while the five references to the same anonymous divine messengers in Jeremiah (7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 35:15;

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2 מביא רעה is found 1. in the synoptic 2 Kgs 22:16, 20//2 Chr 34:24, 28; 2. in the related expressions under discussion (2 Kgs 21:12; Jer 19:3); 3. once or twice in 1 Kgs – 14:10 (but not 3 Kgdms 12:24m); 21:21; and 4. much more often in Jer – 4:6; 6:19; 11:11; 19:15; 35:17; 42:17; 45:5; 51:64.

3 During the discussion which followed the oral presentation of this paper, comparison with 'two legs' (2 Sam 9:13) and 'two horns' (Dan 8:7) suggested that mention of both elements of a pair denotes totality.

4 Both the pl. participle and the masc. suffix are surprising.

and 44:4) overlap with the Shiloh theme in chapters 7 and 26, and with 'bringing disaster' in ch 35, as also in 2 Kgs 21:10-16. b. 'Innocent blood' (דם נקי) is threaded through the same contexts: the Manasseh references in 2 Kgs 21:16; 24:4; and the Shiloh references in Jer 7:6; 26:15. And the one instance of דם נקי in the books of Samuel (1 Sam 19:5) links innocent blood directly with 'sin' – presumably Jonathan's warning to his father is anticipating the case of Manasseh, where 'innocent blood' (2 Kgs 21:16) and 'sin' (21:17) are found in closest proximity. Then Jer 15:1-4 is preceded by confessions of sin in 14:7, 20 (and 20 mentions the 'guilt of our fathers').

Deuteronomists and dating?

A broad scholarly consensus would simply attribute the several connections sketched above to the 'Deuteronomists'. However, given the alarming flexibility with which that label can be applied, it is worth striving for greater precision. Three recent part answers each brought me up with a shock:

a. Jer 15:1 indicates that, at the close of the 7th century BCE, Moses and Samuel were generally held to be popular and effective intercessors.[5]

b. 'The use of [אשר כל־שמעו תצלינה שתי אזניו, 1 Sam 3:11] in the other two passages does not automatically mean that this verse derives from the late monarchic period, since the corpus we have of surviving ancient Israelite documents is far too limited to determine dates statistically.'[6]

c. The prophetic figures ('prophetic' in the broadest sense of that term) within the Former Prophets, over against the composite figures we meet in the Latter Prophets, come across to us like real prophets of the ancient near east – Samuel and the others need not have been historical, but they present themselves authentically (HANS BARSTAD, 2007, in an unpublished seminar paper).

SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER dates one corner of our triangle to the late 7th century, holding that Jer 15:1-4 does preserve authentic testimony from the late monarchic period about great figures from the past. TSUMURA, as he contemplates one of the three similar statements, refuses to accept any significant linkage. I take it that he is seeking to protect words attributed to Samuel from any claim of being 'late monarchic' – the period to which he would date Jer 19 and 2 Kgs 21. Both of

5 CH. SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER, ELLA, ARES und die Samuel-Überlieferung, in: G. AULD / E. EYNIKEL (eds.), For and Against David, BETL, Leuven, in press.

6 D.T. TSUMURA, The First Book of Samuel, NICOT, Grand Rapids MI 2007, 179.

these scholars, though in different ways, appear confident in 'late monarchic' as a historical benchmark. BARSTAD would not, I think, back himself into such a corner; but I am worried at any suggestion of a global contrast between the verisimilitude (in an ancient near eastern context) of the prophetic figures in the Former Prophets over against more obviously composite figures of the Latter Prophets. I would tend to see Samuel, followed closely by Elijah, as *veteris testamenti propheta compositissimus*, unless such characterisation belong better to Moses.

Another link with the Latter Prophets may help to explain the distinctive variant in Samuel (הנה אנכי עשׂה דבר) at the opening of the threatening sentence. Amos (the book) shares several features with Jeremiah (most obviously the visions[7]). One of the five instances of Yahweh's 'servants the prophets' outside 2 Kings and Jeremiah is found in Amos 3:7, where not only do we find the threatening עשׂה דבר: 'do something' ('do you-fear-you-know-what': something which is all the more disconcerting because it is not specified), but this threat is directed against 'Israel', just as in 1 Sam 3:12. This further connection adds to the evidence for Samuel as *propheta compositissimus*.

If neither of the answers mentioned so far ('no later than late monarchic' and 'Deuteronomistic') appears satisfactory, how can greater precision be achieved? A quick survey of commentators on the three biblical books readily reminds us that the three points of any triangle also define a circle: we may be dealing here not with a significant triangle, but a vicious circle. DRIVER, facing תצלינה in Samuel[8], tells us he would have expected תצלנה. But HOLLADAY, reading תצלנה in Jeremiah[9], tells us תצלינה is the correct form. The grass on the other side of the fence is always sweeter. Most commentators on any of the three books simply content themselves with a cross-reference to one or both of the similar threats. KIRKPATRICK, writing on Samuel[10], observes: 'In [Jer 19:3] there may be a tacit reference to [1 Sam 3], suggesting a comparison between the destruction of Shiloh and the destruction of Jerusalem, such as is found elsewhere in Jeremiah (vii.12-14, xxvi.6).' MCCARTER[11] compares 'both ears … will ring' with 2 Kgs 21:12, which he ascribes to CROSS's second Deuteronomist. He does not develop the point; but I take it he is implying that the divine word to Samuel is no less post-monarchic than the expansion of the Manasseh-pericope in 2 Kgs 21.

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7 Amos 7:1-9; 8:1-3 and Jer 1:11-14.

8 S.R. DRIVER, Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel, Oxford 1890, 35.

9 W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, Hermeneia, Philadelphia, 1986, 534.

10 A.F. KIRKPATRICK, The First and Second Books of Samuel, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, Cambridge 1930, 28.

11 P.K. MCCARTER, Jr., I Samuel, AB 8, New York 1980, 98.

It is particularly surprising to find that McKANE offers no discussion of this matter in his otherwise detailed discussion of Jeremiah 19:1-15[12], and despite the fact that he treats at great length elsewhere in his substantial commentary the monograph debates over the prose materials in Jeremiah and their relationship with the so-called Deuteronomists.[13] It should, however, be noted that he cautions against considering Jer 15:1-4 as an original unit: he is clearly sympathetic to seeing 15:4 'as a modified conflation of Deut 28.25 … and 2 Kgs 24.3'.[14] And yet his commentary may help us indirectly in our quest for the meaning of the rare verb צלל: with others, McKANE does draw attention to one instance of significant wordplay in Jer 19: between בקבק (the pottery flask, 1) and ובקתי ('and I will devastate', 7).[15]

There has been no agreement over the exact meaning of תצלנה. 'Tingle' is often used in English; but in more recent years McCARTER (94), HOLLADAY (534), and THOMPSON[16] have used 'ring'. 'Gellen' has been used in German from THENIUS to HENTSCHEL[17]. DHORME used 'tinteront'[18], while CAQUOT and DE ROBERT recast the sentence: 'auront les deux oreilles bourdonnantes'[19]. Outside our 'triangle', the verb צלל occurs only once. It describes the response of Habakkuk's lips (3:16) to the sound of the divine approach – 'quiver'? Nouns related to צלל I (צלצל and מצלה) have been translated 'bells', 'cymbals', 'castanets' (all percussive instruments) on the one side, and 'crickets' (grasshoppers, cicadas) on the other. Does צלל denote a repetitive (quivering?) sound like that of castanets or crickets, or – or also – the result of a larger percussive bang? Is it fanciful to suggest that צלל might fit well into the context of creative assonance in Jer 19 – or better 'destructive' assonance? Is what צלל conveys appropriate also to the crash of pottery being smashed (Jer 19:3, 10), or at least to the reaction of the ears to such a crash?[20]

12 W. McKANE, Jeremiah I, ICC, Edinburgh 1986, 443-459.

13 McKANE, Jeremiah I, xli-l.

14 McKANE, Jeremiah I, 336.

15 McKANE, Jeremiah I, 452-453.

16 J.A. THOMPSON, Jeremiah, NICOT, Grand Rapids MI 1980, 443.

17 G. HENTSCHEL, 2 Könige, NEB 11, Würzburg 1985, 103.

18 E. DHORME, Les Livres de Samuel, Études Bibliques, Paris 1910, 44.

19 A. CAQUOT / PH. DE ROBERT, Les Livres de Samuel, CAT VI, Genève 1994, 63.

20 The word has achieved a more positive sense in Ivrit, where הצליל means 'set to music' or 'record'.

Corroboration from Mizpah

Mizpah, not far north of Jerusalem, provides further corroboration that there are close links between the book of Jeremiah, the beginning of Samuel, and the end of Kings. Like the cluster of expressions discussed above, the role of Mizpah as seat of governor Gedaliah after the fall of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 25:22-26) is a theme found in Jeremiah and in special Kings material not shared with the end of Chronicles. Mizpah features only once in Chronicles (in the synoptic 2 Chr 16:6//1 Kgs 15:22), as a border post which played a role in the struggle between north and south. Then in Neh 3:7, 15, 19 it simply denotes one of the several regions contributing support for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

The point at which Kings and Jeremiah differ over Mizpah is this: although 2 Kgs 24:18-25:30 and Jer 52 are very similar, the short report in 2 Kgs 25:22-26 represents a major exception to this rule, and is not part of Jer 52 LXX (MT has a plus of its own at the same point [52:28-30] about numbers of the deported). Instead, a much fuller report of the Mizpah incident is given at Jer 40-41.

Within the books of Samuel and Kings, Mizpah features again (apart from 1 Kgs 15:22 and 2 Kgs 25:22-26) only in the narratives about Samuel himself in the earlier chapters of 1 Samuel. It was to Mizpah (10:17) that Samuel summoned the people to rebuke them over their decision to prefer a king to Yahweh, and to preside over the lot-procedure by which Saul was publicly identified as Yahweh's choice. And Mizpah features repeatedly (x7) in 1 Sam 7:5-17 as the place where Samuel judged Israel and 'prayed for' (התפלל) them. This points to yet a further significant collocation: just as Jer 40-41 provides the fuller report of the situation in Mizpah after the collapse of Jerusalem, sketched briefly at the end of 2 Kings, the immediately following ch 42 describes Jeremiah (presumably still located in Mizpah) 'praying for' his people. Just as Jer 15; 19 demonstrated several significant links with 1 Sam 3 and 2 Kgs 21, so too we find distinctive themes in Jer 40-42 interlinked with 1 Sam 7; 10 and 2 Kgs 25.

From linkage to influence

To start with Mizpah: MONTGOMERY and GEHMAN[21], GRAY[22], and (very cautiously) HOBBS[23], consider the shorter note in Kings to be a late

21 J.A. MONTGOMERY and H.S. GEHMAN, The Books of Kings, ICC, Edinburgh 1951, 564-566.

summary of the information in Jeremiah. FRITZ[24] follows WANKE[25] and, much earlier, MOWINCKEL[26] in talking of a common source; but the fuller discussions by BRUEGGEMANN[27] and SWEENEY[28], though they treat Jer 40-41 within their comments on 2 Kgs 25:22-26, offer no judgment on the relative priority of these two texts. 'To [BECKING's] knowledge the thesis that Jer. 40:7-41:15 is a redactional elaboration of 2 Kgs 25:22-26 has not been defended'[29], but only toyed with[30]. While in general a longer version of a narrative might be considered a later development of a shorter one, it is very difficult to give priority to 2 Kgs 25:22-26 given the absence from Jer 52 of corresponding verses. The presence of several other doublets within the book of Jeremiah suggests that such verses would not have been deleted from the final chapter simply because they had been further elaborated earlier. RÖMER contrasts the 'views about life in Judah after the Babylonian invasion' expressed in 2 Kgs 24-25 and Jer 39-41[31]; and, although he states that Jer 39-41 'should not be ascribed to a Deuteronomistic redaction', he does not pronounce on the priority of either text.

The priority of Samuel or Jeremiah in relation to Mizpah is better handled as part of the more general issue of the book of Jeremiah and the opening chapters of 1 Samuel. Within Sam-Kgs, 'ears' are the subject of a verb only in the two passages under review (1 Sam 3:11 and 2 Kgs 21:12); but in Jeremiah, in addition to 19:3, 'ears' are described a further three times – and within what is widely regarded as the poetic reservoir of the Jeremianic tradition (5:21; 6:10; 9:19[32]). 'Foreign (נכר) gods', against which Samuel warns (1 Sam 7:3) are a theme of Jer 5:19 and 8:19. The Ba'alîm appear in Jer 2:23 and 9:13; and, within the books of Samuel, only in 1 Sam 7:4 and 12:10 (both times in the words of

22 J. GRAY, I&II Kings, OTL, London [3]1977, 770-772.

23 T.R. HOBBS, 2 Kings, Word Biblical Commentary 13, Waco TX 1985, 360.

24 V. FRITZ, 1&2 Kings, A Continental Commentary, Minneapolis 2003, 423.

25 G. WANKE, Untersuchungen zur sogenannten Baruchschrift, BZAW 122, Berlin, 115-116.

26 S. MOWINCKEL, Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia, Kristiana 1914, 29-30.

27 W. BRUEGGEMANN, 1&2 Kings, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary, Macon GA 2000, 601-605.

28 M.A. SWEENEY, I&II Kings, OTL, Louisville 2007, 468-469.

29 B. BECKING, From David to Gedaliah. The Book of Kings as Story and History, OBO 228, Fribourg / Göttingen 2007, 154.

30 BECKING refers to C.T. BEGG, 'The Interpretation of the Gedaliah Episode (2 Kgs 25:22-26) in Context', Antonianum 62, 1987, 3-11.

31 TH.C. RÖMER, The So-Called Deuteronomistic History, London 2005, 115.

32 The first two depict the people as unable to hear (and see); the third wants the women to teach their daughters mourning.

Samuel himself). And two of the instances of מביא רעה occur within Jeremianic poetry in the same few opening chapters (4:6; 6:19). It seems not improbable that some of Samuel's language, including his words about ears 'quivering', 'ringing', or 'reverberating', as also his role at Mizpah were learned from the developing Jeremiah tradition. The Jeremiah – Manasseh – Samuel link in Jer 15:1-4 plus the saying which developed in the context of Jer 19 led to copying that saying into passages connected with Samuel and Manasseh. The developing book of Jeremiah should be recognised as one of the sources of Samuel.

In a forthcoming commentary[33], I argue that the books of Samuel represent several stages of development in thinking about the beginnings of monarchy in Israel. At an early stage, the sole focus was on the reign of David; and his predecessor Saul was mentioned only in (his) passing. Then the intertwined stories of Saul and of the younger David were added as a substantial introduction to an expanded version of the account of David as king. It was only at a still later stage that many of the materials in the opening chapters of 1 Samuel were added, contributing the developed picture of Samuel – part prophet, part priest, part political-cum-military leader of his people. Within this development, Shiloh and the ark (and Eli with them) appear to be prior to Samuel. Samuel the seer, whom Saul consulted about the loss of his father's donkeys (1 Sam 9), had not yet been developed into the Samuel entrusted as a child to Eli's care (1 Sam 1-2) who grew up to replace him – nor yet the Samuel whose night vision (perhaps better audition) is reported in an account (1 Sam 3) containing more key terms of developed biblical prophetic thinking than any passage of comparable length in the Hebrew Bible. Even if later stages in this developed account were indebted to the portrait of Jeremiah, it may be that earlier stages in the emerging books of Samuel were also among the sources of the book of Jeremiah.

The dialogue implicit and explicit within and between biblical books continues, and any 'last' word will only be the chronologically 'latest'. However, there appears to be a developing generalisation in the object of the divine/prophetic threat. 'This place' (Jer 19:3) originally signified the temple (as also in Jer 7:3-4), but had already in the development of that chapter (19:12-13) become Jerusalem, on the way to becoming 'Jerusalem and Judah' as in 2 Kgs 21:12, and finally a gener-

33 In the Old Testament Library series of WJK Press – but anticipated in GRAEME AULD, 1 and 2 Samuel, in: J.D.G DUNN and J.W. ROGERSON (eds.), Commentary on the Bible, Grand Rapids MI 2003, 213-245.

alised 'Israel' in 1 Sam 3:11. Similarly 'this place' (Jer 7:3), defined immediately as 'the temple' (7:4) had become in Jer 7:7 'the land which I gave to your fathers'.[34]

34 See further G. AULD, Samuel at the Threshold, SOTSM, Aldershot 2004, 194.

What Prophets Do. Reflections on Past Reality in the Book of Jeremiah[1]

HANS M. BARSTAD

The Historicist Heritage of Prophetic Studies

For more than 2000 years, no one doubted that the words found, for example, in the Book of Jeremiah, did go back to a prophet Jeremiah who was active for four decades around the period of the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in the 6th century BCE.

These traditional views on the prophets changed radically after the introduction of historical critical methods. The breakthrough of modern biblical studies was a result of the pioneering activity in German universities in the 19th century. This historicist 'positivism', as we know, grew, in particular, out of the famous German historical school of Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886). Von Ranke and other historians of the time put a lot of weight on the study of sources (*Quellenforschung*) in their historical reconstructions. Ranke is also influenced by Sir Walter Scott, and wants to write good literature.[2]

It is important to realize that these history writers in reality wrote a kind of fictitious novels, believing that this gave access to the reality of the past in a positivistic fashion. Ranke's contemporary, the ancient historian Mommsen (1817-1903), in fact received the Nobel Prize in Literature for his historical works in 1902. This is the more remarkable as Mommsen is regarded as representing the transition from the aesthetic

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1 In addition to the presentation in the May Meeting of the Prophecy Network (12 May 2007), some of the thoughts formulated here were presented also in a Gunning Lecture, the University of Edinburgh, 1 June 2005, and in the opening address at the International SBL Meeting in Edinburgh, 2 July 2006. I am grateful to Professor Timothy Lim for the invitation to give the Gunning Lecture, and to Professor Kent Harold Richards for his kind invitation to the SBL event. I am likewise thankful to those of my listeners who gave valuable feedback, much of it included here.

2 See U. MUHLACK, Franz Leopold von Ranke, NDB 21, 2003, 140-142.

literary history writing of the 18th and 19th centuries to a strictly analytical positivistic work with sources.[3]

Von Ranke is often referred to as the father of modern history. Among his claims we find that it was the task of the historian to reconstruct the past on the basis of primary sources rather than repeating the work of former history writers. The work with sources, known to us also from the Renaissance, was very important and became a much larger part of the historian's work than ever before.

The enormous influence of this scholarship on subsequent generations of bible researchers, noticeable also today, can hardly be exaggerated. The so-called historical critical methods, Literary Criticism (*Literarkritik* or *Quellenkritik*) and Form- and Tradition History (*Formgeschichte*, *Traditionsgeschichte*) made up the mother milk of scholarly upbringing in Western theological faculties, both in Hebrew Bible and New Testament research.[4]

Since prophetic research belongs to the wider field of biblical studies, this area, too, is deeply rooted in German historicism. Even if the story is quite a multifaceted one, it suffices here to refer to the

3 See A. DEMANDT, Theodor Mommsen, 1817-1903, NDB 18, 1996, 25-27. Likewise important was influence from classical philology represented by U. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1848-1931), Mommsen's father in law.

4 It is remarkable how long this influence went on in Academia. In many instances, it is as if biblical studies isolated themselves from the rest of the world, and were allowed to lead a ghetto like existence. Among the sporadic attacks on the historicist genetic heritage of much contemporary biblical scholarship one may mention the early important work by M. J. BUSS, The Idea of Sitz im Leben. History and Critique, ZAW 90 (1978), 157-170. An attack especially on the way source critics have worked with the narratives of Genesis is represented by the presidential SBL address of L. H. SILBERMAN, Listening to the Text, JBL 102 (1983), 3-26, especially 8-9, and *passim*. SILBERMAN is influenced by structuralism. He shows convincingly how a structuralist reading of the texts helps us to bring out adequate meanings in texts that historical critical approaches have clearly misunderstood. However, one does not have to accept structuralism in order to see that his critique is valid. ROY MELUGIN has presented us with some examples of historical critical approaches to the Book of Amos, illustrating the poverty of the arguments, and the multitude of methodological problems involved in the use of such procedures. See R. MELUGIN, Prophetic Books and the Problem of Historical Reconstruction, Prophets and Paradigms. Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker, ed. S. B. REID, JSOTS 229, 1996, 63-78. MELUGIN concludes on p. 78: 'In sum: I believe that historical criticism should play a more modest role in the study of historical books than most of us were taught in graduate school. It remains a valuable tool, but one whose place in the larger scheme of things must be very carefully evaluated.' More recently, we find an assault on classical form criticism in A. CAMPBELL, Form Criticism's Future, The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century, ed. M. SWEENEY and E. BEN ZVI, 2003, 15-31. The whole volume contains several important contributions debating the nature and relevancy of form criticism in the present intellectual climate.

strong influence on subsequent generations of biblical scholars of the works of Hermann Gunkel (1862-1932).

Some scholars seem to hold the view that whereas J. Wellhausen (1844-1918) was a historian,[5] Gunkel was more of a literary critic.[6] However, strongly influenced by Wellhausen, and a student of A. von Harnack (1851-1930) and B. Stade (1848-1903), Gunkel, too, was clearly a historian. Moreover, such distinctions as those made between 'historical' and 'literary' are neither relevant nor very useful when it comes to 19th century German intellectual mentality.

Gunkel was, as a child of his time, unable to think as a non-historicist. It appears to be known that he received important inspiration from von Ranke and Mommsen.[7] No matter what may lie behind such assumptions, we have sufficiently clear statements in Gunkel's own writings on the importance of contemporary history mentality for his intellectual formation.[8] If in doubt about Gunkel's abilities as a source critic, all one needs to do is to take a look at his classical Genesis commentary.

When Gunkel introduced his genre investigations into biblical studies he revolutionized prophetic research. He did this, however, as a fully fledged member of the German historicist club.

Gunkel claimed that the prophets underwent a long, almost 'evolutionist', historical, development. At first, they were ecstatic, merely able to utter only very short pronouncements. Then prophets became more like a kind of preachers who gave short speeches, conveniently about the size of the chapters of the present prophetic books. Only later did the prophets become writers (parts of Jeremiah, all of Ezekiel). And whereas the 'original' prophetic speech consisted of poetic forms only, later on, prophets also used prose language.

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5 According to SMEND, Wellhausen was accused of Hegelianism whereas he in reality was a historian in the tradition of Thomas Carlyle, Theodor Mommsen, and Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897). The latter was a student of Von Ranke. See R. SMEND, Wellhausen, Julius, Dictionary of German Biography 10, 2006, 445.

6 Here in the meaning of a historian of literature. The term 'literary criticism' is confusing as it may also be a translation of German *Literarkritik*, which is another technical term for *Quellenkritk* ('Source Criticism').

7 W. KLATT, Hermann Gunkel. Zu seiner Theologie der Religionsgeschichte und zur Entstehung der formgeschichtlichen Methode, FRLANT 100, Göttingen 1969, 17; 230; 264.

8 See H. GUNKEL, Das Alte Testament im Licht der modernen Forschung, in: D.A. DEISSMANN and others (eds.), Beiträge zur Weiterentwicklung der Christlichen Religion, Munich 1905, 40-76, above all 54-60. Since scholars of those days did not put the same weight on referencing as we do, one seeks in vain for names like Ranke and Mommsen. However, one should certainly not underestimate the influence of Wellhausen on Gunkel. Wellhausen is mentioned several times in Gunkel's essay.

It took, according to Gunkel, hundreds of years for the prophetic books to develop into texts like the ones we know today. Since a lot of later material was added during this accumulation period, the task of biblical scholarship is to study the prophetic books and their literary units, and to sort out what was not originally a part of the prophetic message.[9]

This program was always a very optimistic one. Following Gunkel, and others, it was thought that the scientific methods of biblical research made it possible to reconstruct the historical biographies of the Hebrew prophets, including even the very words (*ipsissima verba*) that they had spoken. As we see, this is again strongly influenced by German historicism, where in addition to source criticism 'empathy' also played a major role.

It was commonly believed that historians could situate themselves into the historical reality of ancient Israel, and 'live' there with the prophets. This kind of hermeneutics has been described characteristically by Schleiermacher's 'psychological' interpretation.[10]

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9 H. GUNKEL, Die israelitische Literatur, Kultur der Gegenwart I, Orientalische Literatur 7, Leipzig 1925, 53-112, pp. 84-85.

10 Compare the following quotation from SCHLEIERMACHER: 'Ebenso aber auf der andern Seite, was is wohl die schönste Frucht von aller ästhetischen Kritik über Kunstwerke der Rede, wenn nicht ein erhöhtes Verständnis von dem inneren Verfahren der Dichter und anderer Künstler der Rede von dem ganzen Hergang der Komposition vom ersten Entwurf an bis zur letzten Ausführung. Ja, ist überhaupt etwas wahres an der Formel, die höchste Vollkommenheit der Auslegung sei die, einen Autor besser zu verstehen, als er selbst von sich Rechenschaft geben könne: so wird wohl nur eben dieses damit gemeint sein können; und wir besitzen in unserer Literatur eine nicht unbedeutende Anzahl kritischer Arbeiten, welche mit gutem Erfolg hierauf sind gerichtet gewesen'. The text is taken from: 'Über den Begriff der Hermeneutik mit Bezug auf F. A. Wolfs Andeutungen und Asts Lehrbuch,' in: F.D.E. SCHLEIERMACHER, Hermeneutik und Kritik. Mit einem Anhang sprachphilosophischer Texte Schleiermachers. 6. Aufl. Herausgegeben und eingeleitet von M. FRANK, Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 211, Frankfurt am Main 1995, 309-346, pp. 324-325. SCHLEIERMACHER'S remarks concern work of literature. However, when his ideas were taken over by W. Dilthey (1833-1911), they were also taken over by historians as the ideal for the writing of history. According to H.-G. GADAMER, Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik, Tübingen 1960, p. 186, Dilthey expressed in writing what Ranke and J.G. Droysen (1808-1884) thought. GADAMER deals with how the German history school inherited the hermeneutics of the Romantic era on pp. 185-205 of his work.

The 'New Hermeneutics'

Today, the situation is *very* different. What has been going on in the academy during the last 40 years or so, has deeply affected the ways in which we can think about the past, as well as raised our awareness of how we create meanings in texts.

I am thinking here also, but not primarily, of what was earlier (and still is) referred to as 'the Bible as Literature', with its stress on final form readings. These trends belong, among others, to the important early developments of the situation in which we find ourselves today.[11]

Another important issue concerning the final form readings is that they do not constitute a method in themselves, nor do they guarantee sound and adequate ways of understanding texts. In the same way as there is no 'original' version of a text, there is also no 'final form'. Never ending masses of new readers and new historical settings always have and always will form an inherent part of the process of reading and understanding texts. Literature can never be non-historical. Nor can the methods we use. These, too, constitute a part of our historical situation. The real danger lies in not taking history seriously.

More important to scholars with an interest in history are developments in hermeneutics in general. The history of hermeneutics in the Western context is masterfully described by Gadamer.[12] This opus

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11 See, typically, the article by D. ROBINSON, a professor of English literature, who wrote (only 30 years ago) an entry on 'Literature, the Bible as", in: The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. An Illustrated Encyclopedia, ed. by K. CRIM, Supplementary Volume, Abingdon, Nashville 1976, 547-551. In those days, the very small number of scholars using 'literary' methods came almost exclusively from non-theological colleges and universities. Since then the field has increased considerably, and the small minority has developed into a majority. Current bibliographic tools give easy access to this fast growing area. One useful example is M. A. POWELL, The Bible and Modern Literary Criticism. A Critical Assessment and Annotated Bibliography, Bibliographies and Indexes in Religious Studies 22, New York 1992.

12 Above all in his Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik, Tübingen 1960. The 6th edition from 1990 is found in H.-G. GADAMER, Hermeneutik I. Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik, Gesammelte Werke, B. 1), Tübingen 1990. There is, as we know, also a massive attack on Gadamer, especially from philosophers of a more positivistic persuasion. I believe that Gadamer is very easy to criticize, not least because of the apparent inconsistencies in his work. In my view, some of the contradictions follow from the fact that much of what he writes is based on his practice as an exegete of classical texts. However, one cannot pretend that Gadamer has not made valuable contributions to what it implies that we humans have the particular ability to read and understand texts. The massive influence of Gadamer is easily recognized in the scholarly debate to day. That alone should indicate that it is unwise to not to take his views into consideration.

magnum is possibly the most influential single work of the last century in our academic field, and it is amazing that biblical scholars appear to have taken so little interest in it.[13]

This will be an increasingly important research area also in the future. However, we should realize that all forms of so-called 'final form' readings of the Hebrew Bible may suffer the danger of overlooking important textual issues caused by the apparent complex diachronic growth processes of these texts. This is particularly the case when translations into other languages are used. However, even people reading the Hebrew texts occasionally minimize or underestimate the several textual problems that we are facing all the time.[14]

In the case of the historical Jeremiah, we may say that to find out exactly 'what happened' in ancient Israel in a positivistic way is simply not possible under the new intellectual regime. This has to do with the nature of our sources, and the fact that we are dealing with events that happened more than 2500 years ago.

It is, above all, the kind of historical research that operates with a confident belief in the possibility of reconstructing true past events based on a scrutiny of the extant sources that is challenged today.[15]

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13 Among the few exceptions one could mention the New Testament scholar EDGAR V. MCKNIGHT. See, for instance, his book, Meaning in Texts. The Historical Shaping of a Narrative Hermeneutics, 1978.

14 In the Book of Jeremiah, for instance, the many duplicates in the text clearly indicate editorial processes. See, for instance, J.-D. MACCHI, Les doublets dans le livre de Jérémie, The Book of Jeremiah and its Reception, BETL 128, ed. A. H. W. CURTIS, T. RÖMER, 1997, 119-150. Very relevant for a better understanding of the growth of the Jeremiah scroll is the evidence from Qumran. When comparing the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible with the Masoretic text, we find that the collection of 'Oracles against the nations' is located in different places in the two versions. In the Septuagint, the collection is placed, quite adequately, after Jer 25:13. In the Masoretic text, on the other hand, we find the words against the foreign nations towards the end of the Jeremiah scroll, followed only by chapter 52. We know from Qumran that there were, at least, two different versions of Jeremiah. The fragments 4QJer^{a} and 4QJer^{c} correspond to MT, whereas 4QJer^{b} and 4QJer^{d} match LXX. Here, consequently, we have an illuminating exemplification of how collections of prophetic words were changed in the course of editorial processes. See The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible, ed. M. ABEGG, P. FLINT, E. ULRICH, 1999, 382.

15 It is not, however, as if such a negative assessment of traditional historical critical methods represents anything new. Coming from Scandinavia, I myself was brought up in a tradition very different from the German one. My teacher, Arvid Kapelrud, was a student in Uppsala in the nineteen-forties. Here, he came under strong influence from the legendary Ivan Engnell who, among other things, strongly advocated the view that it was impossible to reconstruct in reliable details the process that led up to the final writing down of the Hebrew Bible. It is true that if we have learnt anything definite from one hundred years or more of historical critical research it is

Or, to be a little more precise, historical facts in a positivistic fashion are somehow possible to obtain, but not at all as comprehensively as was until quite recently taken for granted. Thus, it is a (common) misunderstanding when some 'postmodernists' claim that historical facts no longer exist. The real problems concern more what historical facts can be for us today, and in what ways we have access to them.

A main assertion of the present paper is that we do have access to the historical prophet Jeremiah, but in different ways from what we thought we had. Thus, we should not try to reconstruct the historical prophet through the dismantling of the Jeremiah scroll, or attempt to recreate the processes that once led from the historical Jeremiah of the 6th century BCE to the prophet of the present Jeremiah book. Rather we should approach the historical prophet Jeremiah as a phenomenon (more on this below).

The background for this is that our understanding on the whole of 'language', 'text', and 'history', and of the relationship between 'text' and 'history', has changed not a little during recent decades. It would probably describe our situation even more adequately if we say that a complete change in intellectual climate has taken place. Key words are not only 'hermeneutics' (H.-G. Gadamer, P. Ricœur), but also 'new history' (R. Chartier, H. White), and 'post-modernism' (J. Baudrillard, J. Derrida, M. Foucauld, J.-F. Lyotard). In addition, there is little doubt that a real challenge to history has come from sociology (P. Bordreuil). It is vital for the future of the humanities, of which biblical studies form an intrinsic part, that they 're-establish' themselves according to the new situation.

Major questions that we have to ask are: What can 'history' be today? What is the 'past', and in what forms and in what ways do we have access to it? What is the relationship between the texts we read and the past?[16] Some may find all of this a little too 'philosophical'. However, this is not something new. Every single scholar who discusses, for instance, genres in the Book of Jeremiah is somehow asking these same 'philosophical' questions, willingly or unwillingly.

There is no one single method that must be used by everyone. In a multi-methodological age, both synchronic and diachronic methods may be used. The kind of method that the exegete employs should be

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that Engnell was right, and that the historical critical methods cannot be used with any certainty to reconstruct the process behind the final form.

16 I have discussed these issues on various occasions. See, most recently, H.M. BARSTAD, The History of Ancient Israel. What Directions Should We Take?, Understanding the History of Ancient Israel, ed. H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, Proceedings of The British Academy 143, 2007, 25-48.

determined, in each instance, by its adequacy for the task at hand. It is the positivism and historicism intrinsic to both synchronic and diachronic approaches that we must fight against. This battle is an ongoing concern since positivism and historicism form a part of our scholarly culture, inherent even in the very tools with which we perform our work.[17]

Unlike former generations (Schleiermacher) hermeneutics today (Gadamer, Ricœur) is, slowly, moving from the realm of epistemology to ontology. To the present day empiricist, the boundaries between subject and object have been blurred, but they have not disappeared.

Some critics have accused the hermeneutics debate of relativism, and even nihilism. However, the relativism represented by various reader oriented methods is necessary, and therefore a healthy one. There is a limit to the relativism, though. Texts cannot mean 'anything'.

For my own part, I find that some, but not all, of the accusations that recent trends in the humanities suffer from 'relativism' surprising. Anyone who is well versed in historical critical attempts to solve the mysteries of the 'J source', or to reconstruct the original *Sitz im Leben* of a 'psalm', or to identify and to date a large amounts of strata in a prophetic book not only to an exact century, but even decade or year, will encounter a not insignificant 'relativism' with a bewildering multitude of different dates for the 'same' texts.[18]

It represents a superb paradox that methods that were introduced in an attempt to make biblical studies more scientific, and where there

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17 I have dealt with the problem that much biblical scholarship is still very influenced by traditional historical critical research, using Jeremiah as an example. See H.M. BARSTAD, Jeremiah as Text. Some Reflections on Genre and Reality in Old Testament Prophetic Research, Historie og konstruktion. Festskrift til Niels Peter Lemche i anledning af 60 års fødselsdagen den 6. september 2005, ed. M. MÜLLER, T.L. THOMPSON, Forum for Bibelsk Eksegese 14, 2005, 11-18.

18 One of the more extreme examples of such an ultra positivist approach may be found in the works of JULIAN MORGENSTERN, discussing the dating of the prophet Amos: 'And this in turn points to the New Year's Day, the day of the fall equinox, two years before, 751 B.C., as the date of Amos' address to the people at Bethel.// But we may go even further and fix almost the exact hour, and even minute, of Amos' utterance. For, as we have just seen, Amos must have beheld his fifth and final vision just at that moment in the ritual of the New Year's Day when the chief priest had come forth from standing in the presence of the Deity and had advanced to the near-by incense altar to perform the regular rites there. The entrance of the chief priest into the presence of the Deity was bound up with the coming of *kᵉbod Yahweh*, the first rays of the rising sun upon the day of the fall equinox, the New Year's Day'. See J. MORGENSTERN, Amos Studies. Part I, II, and III. In Two Volumes. Volume One, 1941, The Sigmund Rheinstrom Memorial Publications. Vol. 11, [1937-38], 172-73.

can only be one true answer, in reality lead to so many different, mutually excluding results.

Jeremiah represents no exception to this. On the contrary, here, too, we are witnessing a great variety of different dates and a diversity of identifications of different layers. As one masterful example, we may mention a recent work by RAINER ALBERTZ, dealing also with the dating of the Book of Jeremiah.[19]

Also, some of the scholars who have criticized recent trends in hermeneutics quite often appear to confuse hermeneutics with post-modernism. True, the hermeneutics debate and post-modernism have some things in common. Nevertheless, they represent two quite different agendas. And unlike many 'post-modernist' thinkers who deny its existence, there will always be a 'Great Story' to hermeneutics.

Even if groups and trends and individuals most certainly cannot be put into one formula, we might maintain, tentatively and for pragmatic reasons, that most 'post-modernists' would regard Gadamer and Ricœur with much scepticism. They would, likewise, claim that their Great Stories belong to metaphysics and not to philosophy. Many of the post-modernists regard themselves as followers of Nietzsche, and regard the whole of western philosophical tradition as without any value at all. To them, philosophy must go back to pre-Socratic traditions.

Above all, some of the post-modernist attempts to deny that texts do not refer to realities outside themselves have not been very helpful. We should realize, though, that even if they have provided some wrong answers the questions asked by 'post-modernists' may still be useful and relevant for biblical scholars.

Subsequently, to the historian of ancient Israel today, including students of the prophetic movement, there are some important new points of orientation. With the uncertainty when it comes to tracing the tradition processes, we are bound to take our starting point in the texts themselves, in the final shape which is the form in which we actually have access to the texts.

This is a healthy reminder anyway. Too often in our field, we are making generalizations that are based on former abstractions. This is what I have referred to above as the 'Gunkel heritage'. Clearly, this is not always an adept designation. Both can the 'Gunkel heritage' be sound, and other abstractions can be misleading. For instance, I would

19 R. ALBERTZ, Die Exilszeit. 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr., Biblische Enzyklopädie 7, 2001, 231-60. This is a very competent work showing how historical critical exegetes work and have worked with the Book of Jeremiah. Even if one cannot always agree with the way it is done, such observations, too, based on the Hebrew text, have many useful observations that can be used also by scholars working with other methods.

maintain that some of the post-modernist attempts to deny that texts do refer to realities outside themselves are problematic.

We shall, nevertheless, have to make some mental adjustments in relation to the ways in which we approach texts. If one is interested in the historical Jeremiah, for instance, the study of the Jeremiah scroll, in its final form, must always be our starting point.

One survival from our historicist 'past' has to do with the way explanation of historical texts takes the form of elucidating the origin of a phenomenon. The common underlying assumption is that to explain the origin of a text, is also to understand it. However, we have no way of tracing with any great degree of certainty the development of the traditions about the prophet Jeremiah that we find in the Jeremiah Scroll back in time in order to establish the 'original' historical events. Our knowledge of the life and work of the 6th century prophet Jeremiah in Jerusalem is basically based on the stories that we encounter in the Jeremiah Scroll. In this way the past is here and now, to be found in the very texts that we are reading. This is a highly important observation since it restores the relevancy and usefulness of the information found in ancient documents like biblical and classical texts for readers of today. To understand a text is primarily to read and understand it, not to trace its uncertain origin.

One inaccuracy that one should avoid today would be to attempt to keep up the false equation between what the text meant and what it means. This approach has really been detrimental to the sound reading of historical texts. Here, some of the French 'postmodernists' have a point. Even if we must refuse their claim that texts do not refer to realities outside themselves, we cannot condone the lack of awareness among quite a few scholars of distinguishing between 'text internal' and 'text internal' realities. However, even if we do believe that texts have historical contexts, and that the Book of Jeremiah reflects a historical situation outside the text, namely the fall of Jerusalem in the 6th century BCE, we have to start with the 'text itself'.

Occasionally, some scholars seem to take a rather aggressively negative view towards German historicism, and its heritage. However, we should never stop reminding ourselves that it is thanks to German universities of the 19th and early 20th centuries that we do have an academic discipline of biblical studies within our universities today. The German speaking scholars of these illustrious ages are the pioneers and groundbreakers of our common discipline. Without their historical methods, there would have been no academically sound biblical scholarship in the first place.

At the same time, it would be equally wrong to revere the work of these prodigies in a 'saintly' manner. If their great ideas were not adjusted, again and again, to new generations of scholars this would indeed be a great sin against their very contributions. It would certainly not be in the spirit of their pioneering activities where they themselves fought against dogmatism and dead encyclopaedic knowledge.

We should realize, though, that, for the moment, we do find ourselves in a transition period ('paradigm shift'). Anyone who reads commentaries and other secondary works on prophetic literature will soon notice the strong continuing power of so-called historical critical mentalities and attitudes. Clearly, this applies not only for prophetic literature, but for biblical studies in general.

Some Remarks on 'Fictitious Truth'

Since we are dealing with literary texts, we shall have to ask more specifically where all of this leads us concerning the historicity of the prophetic figures? What is the relationship between the stories of the Bible and what happened in the past?

To historians, it is of fundamental importance that several theoreticians, Ricœur most prominently, have discussed these issues, and demonstrated how the difference between fact and fiction is not what it looks like. If we want to treat our texts in an adequate way, we shall also have to listen to scholars who have dealt with these concerns in a methodological and theoretical manner.

There is no history for history's own sake. History forms a very important part of human existence. Each new generation of historians have to feel that they can learn from history because they recognize themselves as humans in the texts.

Some have voiced surprise when confronted with the so-called 'Fact-fiction debate'.[20] This is not so strange since 'fact' and 'fiction' were always regarded as opposites. A historical event is considered either to be 'true' or 'not true. Others appear to have misunderstood the issues involved, claiming that a whole series of scholars who have engaged in the debate makes no distinction between fact and fiction. These scholars, subsequently, are erroneously assumed to believe that 'history' and 'literature' belong to the same category and are identical. This, however, is not the case. Most of the scholars who have engaged

20 See, most recently, H.M. BARSTAD, The History of Ancient Israel. Other works are now conveniently collected in H.M. BARSTAD, History and the Hebrew Bible. Studies in Ancient Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography, FAT, 2008.

enthusiastically in the discussions would draw a distinction between 'fact' and 'fiction' in (for instance) the following way: A historical fact is an event that has really taken place in the past. A fictional fact is an event that never happened in real life.

Another consequence of the new situation that concerns us as historians is the relativizing of the event. In 'classical' historicism, the reconstruction of the event as it once happened in the past was the only thing that mattered. Following the introduction of multiple times by the *Annales* School, the layer representing the event was considered to be the least important of the various time layers of history. Since then, the popularity of the event has gone up and down, varying also within successive groups of *Annales* scholars, now in its 4th generation (R. Chartier being one of them). It is vital to stress in this connection that the weakening of the event has not made history less important or less relevant. On the contrary! With the introduction of multiple times where both social institutions (prophecy, war, king and prophet) and climate issues (lack of rain, drought), *la longue durée* perspectives have indeed made history as important and relevant as ever before.

Since we are dealing with a topic of history, it may be worthwhile to start out with some recent deliberations concerning the representational and cognitive nature of narratives in relation to historical facts. Some helpful suggestions were provided by the philosopher W.B. Gallie, who was one of the first to discuss these issues in modern times.[21] Other, well known names among the 'early narrativists' are the philosophers Arthur Danto and Morton White. At least we shall have to listen to what these thinkers actually write before we may claim that these views have little or no relevance for the Hebrew Bible.

Gallie takes his starting point in the fact that Dilthey, Weber, Collingwood, and others had claimed that historical study aims at a kind of understanding that is different from what is common in the natural sciences. Gallie sympathizes with this, but he is not happy with the quality of previous explanations. In contrast, he wants to understand the very nature of a historical narrative. Gallie's point is that the historical narrative is (ideally) self explanatory. In this way, narratives replace explanation and proof in the sciences. Having dealt in some detail with story as such, claiming among other things that history is, more or less, story, he discusses the relationship between story and history.

A quotation from GALLIE may illustrate more fully his point.

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21 See, for instance, W.B. GALLIE, The Historical Understanding, History and Theory 3 (1963), 149-202.

> 'What, then, does the word 'history' mean? I would claim that it stands for a wide family or syndrome of researches and writings, the key members of which always contain narratives of past human actions. These narratives are followable or intelligible in the same general way that all stories are. Of course, to be historical a narrative must rest upon evidence, i.e., it must deal with events that can be shown to have actually happened at roughly assignable dates and places. A historical narrative, furthermore, will usually succeed in making its subject-matter more intelligible to its readers (who are usually presumed to have some vague acquaintance with it) by showing its interconnections with other relevant historical evidences and results.'[22]

One important detail in Gallie's work is his claim that historical events do have a narrative form, but in order to be historical, they must have happened. This, in fact, is a trait shared by the great majority of scholars after Gallie who have advocated the importance of narrative for the understanding of history. It is a misinterpretation, consequently, when some researchers claim that so-called postmodernist historians do not make a distinction between 'fact' and 'fiction'.[23]

A major problem in relation to our discussion of historical prophecy is that quite often we do not have the necessary means to prove that this or that particular event actually did happen in history. Occasionally, we may assume, on the basis of the evidence available to us, that it is likely that this or that incident did take place in the past. The evidence would consist of ancient Near Eastern biblical prophetic texts and other texts in the Hebrew Bible dealing with prophecy. One example of a probable historical event in the Book of Jeremiah, then, would be the sack of Jerusalem in the 6th century BCE, and the likelihood that prophets (like Jeremiah) were active on that occasion.

Under the new post-positivist history regime, however, it is not as problematic as it used to be that there are many things that we cannot know for certain. The reason for this is that we, nevertheless, do have access to prophecy as a historical phenomenon in ancient Israel also in other ways. We can study 'prophecy as a phenomenon' in the ancient Near East, and we will soon see that this phenomenon is the same phenomenon as we find described in the Jeremiah scroll.

Here, recent insights concerning the representational value of fictitious stories may be of immense help to the biblical scholar. A fictitious story is a historically untrue story that could have happened, but that did not happen. A story, therefore, does not have to be true in a positivistic fashion in order to convey historical knowledge. In the light

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22 GALLIE, The Historical Understanding, 172.

23 One possible exception being Hayden White. See BARSTAD, The History of Ancient Israel, 39-41.

of this, the fictitious Jeremiah novel really gains in importance when it comes to extracting positivistic historical information about ancient Israelite prophecy.

This is where we have to make a major break with all those who claim that texts do not refer to realties outside themselves. This, in fact becomes an absurd statement. What is of importance here, of course, is that the empirical world of writers always constitutes the necessary prerequisite for the creation of literary universes. Novels, consequently, are extremely important not only for our understanding of the relationship between history and literature, but also for the question of historical truth.

On the other hand, we should always make clearer distinctions between when we are (tentatively) dealing with text internal realties and when we (likewise probingly) are making text external observations. This very important distinction is often overlooked.

These particular issues have been dealt with by a series of contemporary theoreticians. WOLFGANG ISER, for example, has maintained that the long-established division between fact and fiction is unsatisfactory since fiction without any known reality would be incomprehensible.[24]

The same point is made by DAVID LOWENTHAL.

> 'All accounts of the past tell stories about it, and hence are partly invented; as we have seen, story-telling also imposes its exigencies on history. At the same time, all fiction is partly 'true' to the past; a really fictitious story cannot be imagined, for no one could understand it. The truth in history is not the only truth about the past; every story is true in countless ways, ways that are more specific in history and more general in fiction'.[25]

When discussing novelists that deliberately cross the borders between fact and fiction, ROBERT BERKHOFER writes

> '... history, historical fiction, and fiction all exist along a spectrum ranging from supposedly pure factual representation of literal, historical truth to pure nonliteral, invented fictional representation of fantasy. No work of history conveys only literal truth through factuality, and few novels, even science fiction ones, depict only pure fantasy.'[26]

The real champions of our debate, though, are Hayden White and Paul Ricœur, who, during the last 30 years or so, in a long series of works, have both dealt extensively with problems concerning the representational nature of narrative.[27] Clearly, I am not claiming that the contribu-

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24 W. ISER, The Fictive and the Imaginary. Charting Literary Anthropology, 1993, 1.

25 D. LOWENTHAL, The Past is a Foreign Country, 1995, 229.

26 R.F. BERKHOFER, Beyond the Great Story. History as Text and Discourse, 1995, 67.

27 Cf. P. RICŒUR, Temps et récit 1-3, 1983-85, La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli, 2000. H. WHITE, Tropics of Discourse. Essays in Cultural Criticism, 1978, The Content of

tions of these scholars are without problems. My main point here is only that when fictitious texts do contain historically true information about former societies, this should be regarded as highly relevant for the study of history in relation to ancient texts, including that of the Hebrew prophets.

Through the ancient stories, we get access to historical reality in ancient Israel. The Book of Jeremiah, for instance, may, its present form, be classified as a prophetic novel. When we read this story, we learn a lot about what prophecy was like in ancient Israel. If this had not been the case, there would not have been such a large number of similarities between what we may read about prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah and what we find in many prophetic texts from all over the ancient Near East. Also, none of the editors or reading audiences in Judah in the Persian or Hellenistic periods would have been able to understand the prophetical stories in the first place.

Prophecy as a Phenomenon. Prophecy and Divination in the Ancient Near East

The present author has, on a few earlier occasions, attempted to work with 'Prophecy as a phenomenon'.[28] This term could also be anchored in a more philosophical context. Here, however, I prefer to use the word 'phenomenon' more 'pragmatically', or simply as part of a purely non/technical language usage.[29]

When working with prophecy as a phenomenon, we have to put more weight on social and geographical realities in a *la longue durée*

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the Form. Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation, 1987, Figural Realism. Studies in the Mimesis Effect, 1999.

28 I have also discussed some aspects of this debate in relation to Jeremiah in BARSTAD, Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah.

29 For illustration only, and taken from dictionaries, the following examples are only tentative. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 2, 6th ed., 2007, 'A fact or event that appears or is perceived by one of the senses or by the mind'. Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged, 1993, 'an observable fact or event', 'an item of experience or reality'. The Oxford English Dictionary, 11, 2nd ed., 1989, 'anything that appears, a fact, an occurrence'. In philosophy, what has been referred to as the 'Phenomenological Movement' goes back more than a hundred years, but is far from unified. See the survey by L. EMBREE, Phenomenological Movement, Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy 7, ed. E. CRAIG, 1998, 133-43. For my own part, 'my philosophy' has in particular been influenced by the reading of Heidegger, Gadamer, and Ricœur. In a wider context, this implies that I do not understand 'phenomenon' exactly in a Husserlian meaning, but as belonging to that tradition.

perspective, and on prophecy as an institution. At the same time, we shall attach less importance to the historical event (cf. above). Undoubtedly, we shall also benefit from some of the insights from the debates concerning the relationship between history and literature referred to above ('the fact fiction debate').

One important component of the study of 'prophecy as a phenomenon' concerns the relationship between the kind of prophecy described in the historiographical texts of the Hebrew Bible, and what we may find in the prophetical books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve.

Not many years ago, it was commonly thought that these two corpora described, more or less, two distinctly different types of prophetic activity. Whereas the former was more 'primitive', and dominated by oracles of salvation, the kind of prophecy found in the latter, for instance in the Book of Jeremiah, represented a more developed and theologically more acceptable phenomenon, dominated by oracles of doom.

There was more than one reason for this position. Following an 'evolutionary' point of view, prophecy was regarded as a phenomenon that had developed through stages. The great prophets of doom were thought to represent the last phase of this development. Accordingly, these prophets represented the pinnacle of ancient Israelite religion. What came later represented moral and religious decline. Such views, unfortunately, were very prominent, and resulted, for a long time, in an almost complete lack of interest in 'late' texts like Ezra, Nehemiah and Chronicles, as well as other less suitable theological traditions (like wisdom). All of these texts were regarded as inferior to the classical prophets who were considered as the great theologians of their time.

Moreover, categorical statements about the marked differences between the prophets of the historiographical narrative books (prophets of prosperity/ salvation/ happiness) and the prophetic words that we find in collections of prophetic words like e.g. Jeremiah (prophets of doom) also came about through a misreading of some of the texts.

Some scholars misunderstood (and still do) the cognitive status of the rhetorical and poetic prophetic Hebrew language. Words of doom, for instance, were felt to be too harsh to be taken conditionally, or as admonishments. Whenever there were glimpses of hope or oracles of salvation for Israel to be found in the prophetic books proper, such statements were often regarded as 'later additions' to the texts. Here, a further difficulty would follow from the fact that the late editors of the Hebrew Bible in Persian and Hellenistic times clearly had a predilection for preserving words of doom since these corresponded more

adequately to current exilic theology where the punishment aspect was overwhelming. An excellent example of this kind of editing is found in the book of Jeremiah.

A likewise important factor to be considered when we discuss prophecy as a phenomenon is the ancient Near Eastern prophetic corpus.[30] We know that the use of ancient Near Eastern parallels is an area fraught with difficulties.[31] On the other hand, we cannot simply overlook the fact that we today have access to a multitude of contemporary 'prophetic' texts from Mesopotamia and ancient Syria, covering two millennia. These texts show how important 'prophecy as a phenomenon' was in the ancient Near East. This again corresponds clearly to the vast amount of references to prophets and prophecy throughout the extant texts of the Hebrew Bible.

When we read contemporary 'prophetic' historical texts from the ancient Near East, we find that the descriptions fit remarkably well the kind of prophetic activity that is depicted in the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible, as well as in the prophetic stories found in historiographical works like the Deuteronomistic history and the Chronicler.

The reason why this must be regarded as more significant today than ever before is not only because we have many more studies of ancient Near Eastern prophecy available, and that we therefore understand the phenomenon better.

Equally important is it that the criteria that were sometimes used in former discussions concerning the relationship between the Hebrew Bible and the surrounding cultures are no longer tenable.

Steeped as they were in historicist diachronic mentalities, questions of comparisons were only considered to be relevant if they could explain the origin of a phenomenon. It was valid to talk about 'influence' only if it could be demonstrated how an original *Sitz in Leben* later changed and how it had been transformed during the handing down of the tradition.

A case in point would be the 'prophetic' texts from Mari. If it could be shown that the prophets of ancient Israel represented a direct con-

30 MARTTI NISSINEN has contributed to this debate in a variety of important ways. For a useful, easily accessible survey of primary texts from all over the ancient Near East, see M. NISSINEN, Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East, SBLWAW 12, 2003. For an important discussion of the Northwest Semitic material, see S.B. PARKER, Stories in Scripture and Inscriptions. Comparative Studies on Narratives in Northwest Semitic Inscriptions and the Hebrew Bible, 1997.

31 I have discussed very briefly with some of the problems involved in H. M. BARSTAD, *Comparare necesse est?* Ancient Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy in a Comparative Perspective, Prophecy in its Ancient Near Eastern Context. Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian Perspectives, ed. M. NISSINEN, SBLSS 13, 2000, 3-11.

tinuation, historically and genetically, from the prophets of Mari, then there would be a connection between the two cultures, otherwise not.[32]

Today, we are witnessing a complete shift in methodologies and intellectual climate within history. Above all, these changes in theory and method take place under the influence of the French *la longue durée* perspective in history, and 'the fact/fiction debate' in literary theory (see above).

If we, for instance, accept that 'intermediaries' were active in Iron Age Palestine (as well as in earlier periods), we shall have to assume that they were of a similar kind as those found 'everywhere else' in the ancient Near East in this period. And if what information about prophecy that we may come across in the stories told in the Hebrew Bible corresponds to a 'common pattern of mediation', this cannot be irrelevant to the problem of historical prophecy in ancient Israel. The whole of the fictitious Book of Jeremiah fits very well into such a common pattern. In this way 'everything' that we find in this book that refers to prophets and prophecy somehow gives away historical information about historical prophets.

In actual fact, the many new insights that have been gained concerning the nature of ancient Near Eastern divination have contributed considerably to further our understanding also of biblical prophecy. One insight from recent research is that the former, strict division between 'prophecy' on one side and 'divination' on the other has been blurred. It has, gradually, become more and more likely that we are dealing with different – sometimes even overlapping – ways of getting approach to the deity's motivation rather than with totally divergent or conflicting systems. All over the ancient Near East various forms of religious specialists were called upon when it was considered necessary or convenient to get access to the divine will.

Divination was performed in a variety of ways (auditions, visions, dreams, or other techniques), but always through an intermediary, a 'seer' or a 'prophet', a 'priest', or other, more 'technical' cultic personnel.[33]

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32 For a more comprehensive discussion of Mari prophecy in relation to ancient Israelite prophecy, using Isaiah 1-39 as a pilot corpus, see H.M. BARSTAD, Sic dicit dominus. Mari Prophetic Texts and the Hebrew Bible, in: Essays on Ancient Israel in its Near Eastern Context. A Tribute to Nadav Na'man, Ed. by Y. AMIT, E. BEN ZVI, I. FINKELSTEIN, and O. LIPSCHITS, Winona Lake, Indiana 2006, 21-52.

33 L.L. GRABBE, Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages. A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel, 1995, R.I. THELLE, Ask God. Divine Consultation in the Literature of the Hebrew Bible, BBET 30, 2002.

It was, above all, in times of national crisis (drought, war), that the need for divine intervention was felt most urgently. It was vital to get in touch with the gods in order to know the outcome of a disastrous situation. Characteristic are the words of lament in Psalm 74:9: 'We do not see our signs; there is no longer any prophet, and there is none among us who knows how long'.

In times of crisis, all over the ancient Near East, religious specialists would give their answers, negative or positive, to high ranking members of society. The statements were believed to come directly from the deity. The assurances of success or statements of ill-luck could be directed towards the enquirer, quite often the king, or they might involve a third party, like an enemy in war, foreign or local.

Similar to what we may learn from the Hebrew Bible (not least from the Book of Jeremiah) prophets were engaged in the war activities of the kings. In the Deuteronomistic history in general, the role of the prophets are most significantly related to the activity of the kings. This is a trait typical not only for biblical prophecy, but for all ancient Near Eastern prophetic activity in antiquity. Prophets are kingmakers, dynasty guarantors, and political and religious advisors to the kings. Even if the way this is described in the stories of the Deuteronomistic history is not historical in our meaning of the word, the phenomenon described nevertheless reflects historical realities.[34]

Among the more comprehensive prophetic corpuses available today are the Neo-Assyrian and the Old Babylonian ones. The large Neo-Assyrian group of texts, SAA 9 1, consists of ten prophetic oracles delivered during the highly dramatic year 681 BCE, when Esarhaddon fought for the throne against his elder brothers, after one of them had murdered his father.[35] An example of the engagement of prophets in dynastic struggles in the Hebrew Bible would be the Nathan stories in the Deuteronomistic history. Likewise, from the Book of Jeremiah, we learn how prophets would engage in the internal fights between the pro-Egyptian kings (supported by Hananiah) and pro-Babylonian kings (supported by Jeremiah).

Here, I will only give two examples from the Mari corpus (Old Babylonian Times), in order to show how these texts, too, fit well into

34 See, among others, Prophètes et rois. Bible et Proche-Orient, LD, hors série, ed. A. LEMAIRE, 2001; B. LEHNART, Prophet und König im Nordreich Israel. Studien zur sogenannten vorklassischen Prophetie im Nordreich Israel anhand der Samuel-, Elija- & Elischa-Überlieferungen, VTS 96, 2003; B. SCHMITZ, Prophetie und Königtum. Eine narratologisch-historische Methodologie entwickelt an den Königsbüchern, FAT 60, 2008.

35 M. NISSINEN, References to Prophecy in Neo-Assyrian Sources, SAAS 7, 1998, 94.

the kind of prophetic activity that we find described in the Book of Jeremiah.[36]

Certainly, prophecy at Mari is far from the time of Jeremiah. On the other hand, this may be one reason why Mari parallels are useful for a phenomenological approach to prophecy. Even if we should be aware of the dangers sometimes associated with overoptimistic notions of the 'Unchangeable Orient', the extraordinary longevity of the prophetic institution is indeed remarkable.

The majority of the Mari texts stems from the 15 years rule of Zimri-Lim, the last Amorite ruler of Mari. Around 1760 BCE, Mari was completely destroyed by Hammurapi. From the Mari texts, we learn how Zimri-Lim was heavily engaged in war enterprises throughout his career.

When reading through the Book of Jeremiah, we find that the single most important concern of the Book is war and war related issues.[37] The war topics are either somehow related to the role of Jerusalem in relation to Assyria, Babylonia, or Egypt, or to Nebuchadnezzar's siege and conquest of Jerusalem, or to various words against the nations. In the collections of prophetic words against the nations, we find the following: Jer 46:2-26 against Egypt, Jer 47 against the Philistines, Jer 48 against the Moabites, Jer 49 against the Ammonites, Edomites, Arameans, Hazor, and Elam, Jer 50-51 against Babylon. Moreover, in addition to these collections, there are also numerous words against nations scattered throughout the Book of Jeremiah.

My first Mari example is AEM I/1 209 [A.4996]. This prophetic text represents a word of doom against Babylon and Hammurapi, as well as a word of salvation to Zimri-Lim and Mari.

'Thus says Mukannišum, your servant: A sacrifice to Daga[n] I offered for the life of my lord, and the respondent {apilum} of Dagan of Tutt[ul] rose, and spoke as follows, saying, 'O Babylon, why do you keep doing (it)? I will gather you to the net and to the lance. The houses

36 Recent editions in English of the Mari texts are J.J.M. ROBERTS, The Mari Prophetic Texts in Transliteration and English Translation, The Bible and the Ancient Near East. Collected Essays, 2002, 157-253; W. HEIMPEL, Letters to the King of Mari. A New Translation, with Historical Introduction, Notes, and Commentary, Mesopotamian Civilizations 12, 2003; M. NISSINEN, Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East, SBLWAW 12, 2003.

37 For an attempt to use the Book of Jeremiah as a historical source for the reconstruction of the events leading up to the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians in the 6th century BCE, see, for instance, D.B. REDFORD, Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times, 1992, 430-469, ALBERTZ, Die Exilszeit, 81-97.

of seven confederates and their treasure into the hand of Zimri-Lim I will surely deliver.'[38]

We note that the similarities to Jeremiah are striking. Not only do we here have a fairly traditional word against Babylon in times of war, spoken by a prophet, and the assurance that the deity will give victory to the local king. We also find a reference to an alliance (treaty).[39] Even if also many other Jeremiah texts could have been taken into consideration, it is sufficient to mention Jer 27 and Jer 49, which reflect political alliances in the time of Nebuchadnezzar.

Jer 27:1-8 includes words of salvation to Babylonia and words of doom to the nations if they do not follow Nebuchadnezzar. The city states involved in the political alliance are Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyros, and Sidon. In Jer 49 the prophet pronounces judgment words against Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, and Elam. The background is clearly the victories of Nebuchadnezzar, and Jeremiah claims that it is God's will Nebuchadnezzar shall conquer his enemies.

In another example from the rich Mari archives, AEM I/1 237, we may read: '... a female ecstatic [*muhhutum*] rose in the temple of [the goddess] Annunitum, and said, 'Zimri-Lim, you shall not go on campaign. Stay in Mari, and I will keep on responding (to you).' My lord should not be negligent in protecting himself ...'[40]

Again the similarity to the Jeremiah story is striking. That prophets played a particularly important role in periods of crisis is very clear also from the Book of Jeremiah. Events like war and drought belong to what Braudel referred to as geographical time, and that later in the 'Annales School' was termed *la longue durée*. More concretely, the king in Jerusalem is asked not to fight against Nebuchadnezzar, but to stay in the city. Only then will YHWH look after the people.

All in all, we are therefore allowed to draw also some historical conclusions concerning ancient Israelite prophecy from the present paper. Prophecy as a phenomenon, therefore, may occasionally become also 'prophecy as a historical phenomenon' in a positivistic fashion. Moreover, such historical suppositions would not only apply to long

38 ROBERTS, The Mari Prophetic Texts, 210-211.

39 The diplomatic treaties between various political entities that are referred to in the Book of Jeremiah reflect an important institution throughout the ages in the ancient Near East. For Old Babylonian times, see D. CHARPIN, Lire et écrire à Babylonie, 2008, 138-151. I have attempted to show how Amos 1-2 describes such diplomatic and military alliances around 800 BCE in the Neo-Assyrian period. See H.M. BARSTAD, Can Prophetic Texts Be Dated? Amos 1-2 as An Example, Ahab Agonistes. The Rise and Fall of the Omri Dynasty, ed. L.L. GRABBE, LHBOTS 421, ESHM 6, 2007, 21-40.

40 ROBERTS, The Mari Prophetic Texts, 198-199.

perspective institutions, but also to individual prophets as historical figures.

Towards a Conclusion

For many years, prophetic studies were dominated by the so-called historical critical methods (Literary Criticism and Form- and Tradition History). Following Gunkel (and others) it was thought that the scientific methods of biblical research made it possible to reconstruct the historical biographies of the Hebrew prophets, as well as their original words (*ipsissima verba*).

In the meantime, a revolution has taken place in the humanities. During the last 30 years or so, historicist-genetic, diachronic strategies have come under increasing pressure from more 'literary' orientated methods, concerned above all with the 'final form of the text', and with reader oriented approaches to the texts.

This development has led to a history aporia in recent prophetic research. We have experienced a tendency to stress the factor that the prophetic corpus, similar to the rest of the texts of the Hebrew Bible, represents late literary creations of the Persian, or even Hellenistic, eras. Furthermore, it has been claimed that these late prophetic texts are purely literary, and have no connections whatsoever with prophecy as a historical phenomenon in ancient Israel.

In the view of the present writer, this is not only an unnecessary, but also an erroneous development. When we study the phenomenon prophecy as it is known to us from a multitude of prophetic texts from a variety of extra biblical environments, we will soon find that the kind of prophetic activity that we find depicted throughout the Hebrew Bible corresponds closely to the ancient Near Eastern one. Clearly, this cannot be coincidental.

As we know from the 'fact/fiction' debate, fictitious texts, too, may contain valuable historically positivistic true information about ancient societies. The Book of Jeremiah, for instance, contains a wealth of information about prophetic activity in ancient Israel even if it is not 'historical' in a much used meaning of the word.

Key philosophers who have dealt with the nature of narrative in relation to historical representation are Walter Bryce Gallie, Arthur Danto, and Morton White. Recent works by Wolfgang Iser, David Lowenthal, Hayden White, and Paul Ricœur concerning the representational value of fictitious stories in relation to historical stories are equally important.

From the fictitious and very late Jeremiah novel we are informed about a multitude of issues that are familiar from ancient Near Eastern contemporary sources. Prophets were active in times of crisis (war, drought). The similarities are so many and so striking that we simply cannot talk about coincidence. To the historian, looking for positivistic historical facts, we can say that these stories are good examples of events that could have happened, but since we do not have *corroborative* evidence, we cannot say that they did happen.

The fictitious Jeremiah Novel centres around one theme - the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BCE. The Book of Jeremiah contains many different agendas and many diachronic layers, and also some historical facts about events that took place in the Neo-Babylonian Empire in the 6th century BCE. But it can also be read as a whole. As a whole, the Jeremiah scroll provides us with a lot of historical information about what prophets did in ancient Israel and in the ancient Near East. The Book of Jeremiah, in fact, can be regarded as a major historical source for the knowledge of prophecy in Iron Age Palestine.

Means of Revelation in the Book of Jeremiah

BOB BECKING

1. Introduction

In his essay 'Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation', PAUL RICOEUR discusses, amongst many other things, the concept of revelation. His argument starts with a rejection of the rather common view on revelation that he construes as problematic. This common opinion is labelled by him as an 'authoritarian, opaque concept of revelation', which substitutes the 'originary expressions of faith' with a closed body of doctrines.[1] The reason for this substitution is that the inspiration characteristic of prophecy is taken as the paradigm for how revelation occurs. Not surprisingly so. Prophetic texts present a 'voice behind the voice' of the prophet who claims to speak in the name of YHWH. An 'inspiration from a first person to a first person'[2] is detectable.

However, if one takes prophecy out of the larger narrative framework of the canon, one risks the danger of *identifying* revelation with inspiration – with the idea of a double author: the divine voice being audible through the prophetic voice. This is what the 'authoritarian, opaque' concept does: it identifies revelation with inspiration and then applies this to the whole Bible, which then becomes a sort of collection of truths that God dictated to the biblical authors. In line with RICOEUR, I would like to reject this identification, or may I say prejudiced confusion of revelation and inspiration. Although I observe that the biblical writers accept and assume the existence of this 'other voice', I construe revelation as the personal epiphany of the characters we are used to call prophets.[3]

In the Book of Jeremiah, a variety of means of revelation – construed as the personal epiphany of the main character of the book - can be detected. Before discussing these instances, I would like to remark

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1 P. RICOEUR, Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation, in: P. RICOEUR, Essays on Biblical Interpretation, ed. L.S. MUDGE, Philadelphia 1980, 73.

2 RICOEUR, Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation, 92.

3 I would like to thank my former student Wilfred van de Poll MSc for hinting me at these issues.

that the Book of Jeremiah should not be read as an eye-witness report on the historical prophet. The present Book of Jeremiah - in its dual tradition[4] – should be seen as the result of a long and probably inscrutable process of editing and redaction.[5] In this essay I take my starting point in the Masoretic text of the Book of Jeremiah without any claims about the historical Jeremiah.

The majority of instances of the process of revelation in the Book of Jeremiah can be labelled as examples of 'revelation-through-the-word'. The regularity of the repeated phrase כה־אמר יהוה, 'thus says the LORD',[6] and other prophetic introductory formula, such as the *Wortgeschehens-formel* הדבר אשׁר־היה אל־ירמיהו מאת יהוה, 'the word that came to Jeremiah on behalf of YHWH',[7] indicates that greater parts of the sayings of Jeremiah are seen as conveyed by an audible revelation. Before we classify Jeremiah as a Barthian-theologian *avant la lettre* and thereby falling back to the obsolete idea of revelation,[8] we need to regard that this

4 On the well known problem of the relation between MTJer and the shorter version in LXXJer, see, e.g., S. SODERLUND, The Greek Text of Jeremiah: A Revised Hypothesis, JSOT Sup. 47, Sheffield 1985; L. STULMAN, The Other Text of Jeremiah, Lanham 1986; H.-J. STIPP, Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiabuches, OBO 136, Freiburg, Göttingen 1994.

5 See next to the Introductions on the Hebrew Bible and the standard commentaries, K. VAN DER TOORN, From the Mouth of the Prophet: The Literary Fixation of Jeremiah's Prophecies in the Context of the Ancient Near East, in: J. KALTNER and L. STULMAN (eds.), Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT Sup 378, London New York 2004, 191-202; K. VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible, Cambridge MA London 2007.

6 This prophetic introductory formula occurs some 150 times in the Book of Jeremiah and is attested throughout the book.

7 See, e.g., Jer 7:1; 11:1; 18:1; with P.K.D. NEUMANN, Das Wort, das geschehen ist …: Zum Problem der Wortempfangsterminologie in Jer I-xxv, VT 23, 1973, 171-217; TH. SEIDL, Die Wortereignisformel in Jeremia, BiZs 23, 1979, 20-47; A.G. SHEAD, The Open Book and the Sealed Book: Jeremiah 32 in its Hebrew and Greek Recensions, JSOT Sup 347, Sheffield 2002, 26-53; J.I. LAWLOR, Word Event in Jeremiah: A Look at the Composition's 'Introductory Formulas', in: J. KALTNER and L. STULMAN (eds.), Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT Sup 378, London New York 2004, 231-243; L. STULMAN, Jeremiah, AOTC, Nashville, 2005, 27-30.

8 As has been done by J. BRIGHT, Jeremiah, AB, Garden City 1965; H. LALLEMAN-TE WINKEL, Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition: An Examination of the Book of Jeremiah in the Light of Israel's Prophetic Traditions, CBETh, 26, Leuven, 2000; W. BRUEGGEMANN, The Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, OTT, Cambridge 2007; see also the implicit criticism on such an overall interpretation of Jeremiah by M. NISSINEN, What is Prophecy? An Ancient Near Eastern Perspective, in: J. KALTNER and L. STULMAN (eds.), Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT Sup 378, London New York 2004, 17-37.

image of Jeremiah might be the construction of the (Dtr-)editors of the book. Next to that a survey of other means of revelation in this book is advisable. Four of them will be discussed in this essay.

2. Sign Acts

Communication is only partly verbal. In order to convey a message various ways for communication are at hand.[9] The Hebrew Bible, and especially the book of the prophets, contains many examples of non-verbal communication that function to convey the prophetic message. Traditionally these acts are depicted as 'symbolic-action'.[10] With FRIEBEL[11] I would prefer the concept 'sign-act' over the traditional indication 'symbolic-action'. The Book of Jeremiah is full of 'sign-acts' used by the prophet to communicate his message. A good example is of course the image of the iron yoke indicating the hopeless situation of Jerusalem when beleaguered by the Babylonians. In Jer 27-28 an encounter between Jeremiah and the prophet Hananiah is narrated in which the symbol of the yoke plays an important role as a communicative sign.[12] After Hananiah had broken Jeremiah's wooden yoke, he received a divine message containing the words:

> For thus says YHWH of hosts, the God of Israel:
> I have put an iron yoke on the neck of all these nations
> so that they may serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon,

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9 See, e.g., N. BONVILLAIN, Language, Culture, and Communication: The Meaning of Messages, Upper Sadle River [2]1997; M.S. MAST, On the Importance of Nonverbal Communication in the Physician-Patient Interaction, Patient Education and Counseling 67, 2007, 315-318.

10 See, e.g., A. VAN DEN BORN, De symbolische handelingen der oud-testamentische profeten, Nijmegen-Utrecht 1935; G. FOHRER, Die symbolischen Handlungen der Propheten, Zürich[2] 1978; E.R. FRASER, Symbolic Acts of the Prophets, SBTh 4, 1974, 45-53; B. LANG, Ezechiel: Der Prophet und das Buch, EdF 153, Darmstadt 1981; P.J. KING, Jeremiah: An Archaeological Companion, Louisville 1993, 159-162.

11 K.G. FRIEBEL, Jeremiah's and Ezekiel's Sign-Acts: Rhetorical Nonverbal Communication (JSOT Sup 283), Sheffield 1999, esp. 11-79.

12 See on these chapters, e.g., R.P. CARROLL, Jeremiah (OTL), London 1986, 523-550; A. GRAUPNER, Auftrag und Geschick des Propheten Jeremia: Literarische Eigenart, Herkunft und Intention vordeuteronomistischer Prosa im Jeremiabuch, BThSt, 15, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1991, 157-159; F.H. CRYER, Divination in its Ancient Near Eastern Environment: A Socio—Historical Investigation, JSOT Sup 142, Sheffield 1994, 294; FRIEBEL, Sign-Acts, 136-166; J.R. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 21-36, AnBi 21B, New York 2004, 302-367; STULMAN, Jeremiah 243-56; BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, 66-70.

and they shall indeed serve him;
I have even given him the wild animals.[13]

The fact that this yoke is made of iron, that cannot be broken, underscores the inevitability of the forthcoming downfall of Jerusalem.[14]

'Sign-acts', however, are not only present in the communication between prophet and people, but also in the interaction between the divine – construed here as character in the story - and the prophet. The most striking example is to be found in the opening chapter of Jeremiah, where in a programmatic scene Jeremiah is instructed to be a 'prophet for the nations' with a dual message of doom and salvation – as expressed by the famous six verbs.[15] On Jeremiah's objection that he is too young and unexperienced to act as a prophet:

YHWH put forth his hand,
and touched my mouth.
And YHWH said to me:
'See, I have put my words in your mouth'.[16]

This 'sign-act' should be seen as a means of revelation, since it communicates a divine message: Jeremiah is now freed from his restraints to be a prophet. In my opinion the 'sign-acts' in the interactions between prophet and people can also be construed as means of revelation.[17]

3. Consulting the Divine

3.1. Consulting the Deity

In Biblical Hebrew the verb דרשׁ, 'to seek', is often used to denote a form of divination that can be depicted as 'consulting the divine'.[18] This

13 Jer 28:14.

14 On the yoke-imagery see now KING, Jeremiah, 159-162; A. RUWE und U. WEISE, Das Joch Assurs und JHWH's Joch. Ein Realienbegriff und seine Metaphorisierung in neuassyrischen und alttestamentlichen Texten, ZAR 8, 2002, 274-307.

15 See now C.J. SHARP, The Call of Jeremiah and Diaspora Politics, JBL 119, 2000, 421-438.

16 Jer 1:9; see W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 1-25, Hermeneia, Philadelphia 1984, 36; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 99-103; FRIEBEL, Sign-Acts, 18; J.R. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 1-20, AnBi 21A, New York 1999, 226-248; STULMAN, Jeremiah, 42.

17 See FRIEBEL, Sign-Acts, 370-406.

18 See, e.g., B.O. LONG, The Effect of Divination Upon Israelite Literature, JBL 92, 1973, 489-497; R. ALBERTZ, Religionsgeschichte Israels in alttestamentlicher Zeit, GAT, 8/1-2, Göttingen 1992, 624; CRYER, Divination, 286-95; A. JEFFERS, Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria, SHCANE 8, Leiden 1996, 237; DCH II, 473-74; J.R.

kind of divination has analogies throughout the entire ancient Near East and is also well-known from ancient Greece. The consultation took place while using a variety of means: oracle seeking; bird watching; omen reading or consulting the Urim and Thummim.

In the Book of Jeremiah, two instances of this use can be found:

a. In Jer 21:2, it is narrated that Pashur invited Jeremiah to consult YHWH. This invitation hints at a pattern that occurs elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.[19] This pattern can be labelled as a 'magical consultation before warfare'.[20] In Jer 21 the episode opens with the *Wortgeschehens-formel* הדבר אשׁר־היה אל־ירמיהו מאת יהוה, 'the word that came to Jeremiah on behalf of YHWH'.[21] Using an adverbial construction, this coming of the word of God is dated to the moment 'when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malchiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah'. Then Pashur invites Jeremiah to consult (דרשׁ) YHWH:

> Please inquire of YHWH on our behalf,
> for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon is making war against us;
> perhaps YHWH will perform a wonderful deed for us,
> as he has often done,
> and will make him withdraw from us.

In fact Pashur is asking Jeremiah for a positive reaction that will lead to the reinstallment of peace and a stronger Davidic kingship. Pashur takes the past as an argument: Since YHWH has performed wonderful deeds for Jerusalem, Pashur hopes that YHWH will act likewise. He, however, makes a selective use of the past by silencing the deeds of YHWH that were bitter and harmful for Israel and Judah. This request, however, is answered by Jeremiah with a prophecy of doom, most probably based on the consultation:

> Thus says YHWH, the God of Israel:
> I am going to turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands
> and with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon
> and against the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the walls;
> and I will bring them together into the centre of this city.
> I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and mighty arm,
> in anger, in fury, and in great wrath.
> And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city,

LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 21-36, AnBi 21B, New York 2004, 99. Pace LALLEMAN-TE WINKEL, Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition, 219-220.

19 See, e.g., Judg 20:27-28; 1 Sam 14:18; 1 Kgs 22:15.

20 See JEFFERS, Magic and Divination, 236-243.

21 On this formula see NEUMANN, Das Wort, das geschehen ist …, 171-217; SEIDL, Wortereignisformel, 20-47; SHEAD, Open Book, 26-53; LAWLOR, Word Event in Jeremiah.

both human beings and animals;
they shall die of a great pestilence.[22]

b. The second pericope to be discussed in this connection is Jer 37:3-10. This textual unit contains an interesting episode. In this episode two Hebrew expressions stand parallel: התפלל, 'to pray for', and דרשׁ, 'to seek (an oracle)'. The first expression is attested in a request of king Zedekiah:

King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to the prophet Jeremiah saying,
'Please pray for us to YHWH, our God.'[23]

The second expression is attested within the prophecy uttered by Jeremiah:

Thus says YHWH, God of Israel:
'This is what the two of you shall say to the king of Judah,
who sent you to me to inquire of me,
Pharaoh's army, which set out to help you,
is going to return to its own land, to Egypt.'[24]

The parallelism makes clear that both expressions have the same semantic connotation. It is interesting to note that the verb דרשׁ, 'to seek; to enquire; to consult', is part of the divine speech in this verse. I will not discuss here the question whether this verse belongs to the original core of the Book of Jeremiah or should be construed as part of redactional activities. To the final redactor the idea of YHWH as a deity seeing himself as being 'inquired' was not seen as a heresy to be omitted from the sacred text. Next to that, a comparable pattern as in Jer 21 occurs. The king is seeking for divine comfort: RONCACE correctly noted that

22 Jer 21:4-6; with H. WEIPPERT, Jahwekrieg und Bundesfluch in Jer 21,1-7, ZAW 82, 1970, 396-406; K.-F. POHLMANN, Studien zum Jeremiabuch: Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Jeremiabuches, FRLANT 118, Göttingen 1978, 31-47; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 405-11; GRAUPNER, Auftrag und Geschick, 157-59; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 567-572; LALLEMAN-TE WINKEL, Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition 219-220; BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, 102-103.

23 Jer 37:3; with POHLMANN, Studien zum Jeremiabuch, 51-52; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 671-674; W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 26-52, Hermeneia, Philadelphia 1989, 287; G.J. KEOWN, P.J. SCALISE, T.G. SMOTHERS, Jeremiah 26-52, WBC 27, Waco TX 1995, 211-218; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 21-36, 93-107; M. RONCACE, Jeremiah, Zedekiah, and the Fall of Jerusalem, LHB/OTS 423, New York, London 2005, 35-46.

24 Jer 37:7; with POHLMANN, Studien zum Jeremiabuch, 52-54; GRAUPNER, Auftrag und Geschick, 157-159; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 671-674; KEOWN, SCALISE, SMOTHERS, Jeremiah 26-52, 211-18; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 2, 287; LALLEMAN-TE WINKEL, Jeremiah in Prophetic Tradition, 220-221; J.R. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 37-52, AnBi 21C, New York 2004, 49-61; G. FISCHER, Jeremia 26-52, HThKAT, Freiburg, Basel, Wien 2005, 307-316; RONCACE, Jeremiah, 35-46.

the verb התפלל, 'to pray for', has the connotation of praying 'on one's behalf, one is seeking salvation from suffering or death'.[25] The king, however, is confronted with the announcement of the withdrawal of the King of Egypt that will eventually lead to the fall of Jerusalem.[26]

3.2. Asking the Deity

The same oracular activity can be phrased with the verb שאל, 'to ask'.[27] I will display two instances from the Book of Jeremiah that feature this activity.

a. In Jer 37 in the aftermath – at least at the narrative level – of the scene where Jeremiah did not deliver a favourable 'answer' to the king, the prophet is encarcarated in the dungeon. After some time[28], king Zedekiah invites Jeremiah in his palace, where he

> … questioned him secretly in his house, and said,
> 'Is there any word from YHWH?'
> Jeremiah said,
> 'There is!'
> Then he said,
> 'You shall be handed over to the king of Babylon.'[29]

The parallelism between שׁאל, 'to ask; to question' and the contents of the clause 'Is there any word from YHWH?' indicates that the verb שׁאל is used here to refer to some sort of oracular activity.

b. This meaning of the verb is reinforced by the passage Jer 38:14, where the verb שׁאל, 'to ask (an oracle)' is used by King Zedekiah in a speech addressed to the prophet:

> The king said to Jeremiah,
> 'I have something to ask you;
> do not hide anything from me.'[30]

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25 RONCACE, Jeremiah, 36.

26 See for the historical context ALBERTZ, Religionsgeschichte Israels, 360-71.

27 See also LONG, The Effect of Divination; CRYER, Divination, 286-95; JEFFERS, Magic and Divination, 237.

28 Jer 37:16: וישׁב־שׁם ירמיהו ימים רבים, 'and Jeremiah stayed there many days'.

29 Jer 37:17; with POHLMANN, Studien zum Jeremiabuch, 64-69; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 676-678; KEOWN, SCALISE, SMOTHERS, Jeremiah 26-52, 211-218; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 2, 288; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 37-52, 62-64; FISCHER, Jeremia 26-52, 319-320; RONCACE, Jeremiah, 53-66. Pace BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, 103, who reduces the meaning of the verb to 'to petition'.

30 Jer 38:14; with POHLMANN, Studien zum Jeremiabuch, 84-87; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 684-687; KEOWN, SCALISE, SMOTHERS, Jeremiah 26-52, 219-231; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 37-52, 73-79; FISCHER, Jeremia 26-52, 337-338; RONCACE, Jeremiah, 95-115.

Here the King construes the prophet seemingly as an oracle to consult. This view is underscored by the fact, comparable with the consultation of the Urim and Thummim, the prophet Jeremiah offers king Zedekiah two alternatives in the following verses.[31]

This analysis has made clear that the consultation of the Divine was an acceptable means of revelation to the final editor of the Book of Jeremiah.[32]

4. Dreams

In the entire ancient Near East, dreams are seen as means for communicating from the divine.[33] The interpretation of dreams was regarded by ancient societies in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Syria, and later in Greece and Rome, as a professional art that required intelligence and skills based on divine inspiration. In the literature from the ancient cultures dreams and their interpretation often occur as a motif. Later on, the interpretation of dreams was treated as a science by philosophers and physicians. Dreams were thought to come either as clear messages, or as symbols requiring interpretation. Dream-books listing images and their meanings were popular. Very few ancient writers were sceptical of dreams; Cicero seems to be the only one.[34] In the Hebrew Bible an ambivalent

31 See esp. N. KILPP, Niederreißen und aufbauen: Das Verhältnis von Heilsverheißung und Unheilsverkündigung bei Jeremia und im Jeremiabuch, BThSt 13, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1990, 92-93; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 2, 290.

32 Pace POHLMANN, Studien zum Jeremiabuch, 33.

33 See, e.g., CRYER, Divination, 157-159.263-272; JEFFERS, Magic and Divination, 125-143; S.A.L. BUTLER, Mesopotamian Conceptions of Dreams and Dream Rituals, AOAT 258, Münster 1998; B. PONGRATZ-LEISTEN, Herrschaftswissen in Mesopotamien: Formen der Kommunikation zwischen Gott und König im 2. und 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr., SAAS 10, Helsinki 1999, 96-127; J.D. HUGHES, Dream Interpretation in Ancient Civilizations, Dreaming 10, 2000, 7-18; A.M. KITZ, 'Prophecy as Divination', CBQ 65, 2003, 22-42; VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture, 180-181; S.B. NOEGEL, Nocturnal Ciphers: The Allusive Language of Dreams in the Ancient Near East, AOS 89, Winona Lake 2007.

34 De Divinatione II 124: Sed haec quoque in promptu fuerint; nunc interiora videamus. Aut enim divina vis quaedam consulens nobis somniorum significationes facit, aut coniectores ex quadam conveniente et coniunctione naturae, quam vocant sumpa/ qeian, quid cuique rei conveniat ex somniis, et quid quamque rem sequatur, intellegunt, aut eorum neutrum est, sed quaedam observatio constans atque diuturna est, cum quid visum secundum quietem sit, quid evenire et quid sequi soleat. Primum igitur intellegendum est nullam vim esse divinam effectricem somniorum. Atque illud quidem perspicuum est, nulla visa somniorum proficisci a numine deorum. Nostra enim causa di id facerent, ut providere futura possemus.

stand towards dreams can be detected. The dreams of Joseph and in the Book of Daniel are generally assessed as adequate communications of the divine will. A comparable assessment can be found in the Book of Numbers:

> When there are prophets among you,
> I, YHWH, make myself known to them in visions;
> I speak to them in dreams.[35]

The Book of Deuteronomy, however, contains the following warning:

> If prophets or those who divine by dreams appear among you and promise you omens or portents, and the omens or the portents declared by them take place, and they say, 'Let us follow other gods' (whom you have not known) 'and let us serve them,' you must not heed the words of those prophets or those who divine by dreams; for YHWH, your God is testing you, to know whether you indeed love YHWH, your God with all your heart and soul. YHWH, your God you shall follow, him alone you shall fear, his commandments you shall keep, his voice you shall obey, him you shall serve, and to him you shall hold fast. But those prophets or those who divine by dreams shall be put to death for having spoken untruthfully[36] about YHWH, your God - who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery - to turn you from the way in which YHWH, your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.[37]

In accordance with this condemnation of prophecy by means of dreaming stands a line in Jer 23:

> 'The prophet that has a dream,
> let him tell a dream;
> and he that has my word,
> let him speak my word faithfully.
> What *is* the chaff to the wheat?', says YHWH.[38]

This verse can be construed as indicating an opposition between 'dream' and 'word'. Dreams being 'chaff', that never can be equated with the pure wheat of the divine word. Nevertheless, dreams are seen as a means of revelation in the Book of Jeremiah, as becomes clear from an example from the Book of Consolation (Jer 30-31):

See on this text M. SCHOFIELD, Cicero for and against Divination, Journal of Roman Studies 76, 1986, 47-65; HUGHES, Dream Interpretation, 17.

35 Num 12:6; see JEFFERS, Magic and Divination, 128.

36 דבר סרה, 'to speak untruthfully', stands parallel to Akk. *dabābu sarrātim* / *surrātim*; see T. VEIJOLA, Das 5. Buch Mose Deuteronomium Kapitel 1,1-16,17, ATD 8,1, Göttingen 2004, 280. The expression is an antithesis of to דבר אמת, 'to speak faithfully', as in Jer 23:28.

37 Deut 13:1-5; see VEIJOLA, Deuteronomium Kapitel 1,1-16,17, 279-293.

38 Jer 23:8.

On this I awoke
And see, my sleep was sweet to me![39]

Some exegetes state that the 'significance of this verse is obscure'.[40] Indeed, there is no continuation with the preceding verses that contain a promise of blessing and satiation for Judah. Elsewhere, however, I have argued that 31:26 should be seen as the final part of the envelope surrounding a collection of seven sub-cantos (30:5-31:25; the envelope consists in 30:4 and 31:26). In my view the remark on the awakening functions as a qualifier to the contents of the seven sub-cantos wrapped by the envelope: the textual units are qualified as the outcome of a dream epiphany.[41] This implies that to the editor of the Book of Jeremiah, dreams were an acceptable means of revelation.

5. Dialogue at the Edge of Loyalty

A very specific feature of the Book of Jeremiah is the presence of 'first person reports' in it: texts in which the prophet is presented in the first person singular: 'I did'; 'I spoke'. Most famous are the 'confessions of Jeremiah'. Various options emerge on the question how to read and how to construe these first person reports? We can read these reports in a naïve historical way: the texts are trustworthy reports on actual deeds and thoughts of the historical Jeremiah. The historical-critical approach advocates an interpretation in which a clear distinction is made between the historical kernel of the book and the present form that emerged out of a complex process of redaction and tradition. I will not embark here on the question on the (im)possibility to reconstruct the 'historical Jeremiah'. I will take my starting point in the final version and accept with Brueggemann that 'every historical presentation of a person is a mediation and a construction'.[42] The Book of Jeremiah is a specific perspective on the person, and since we cannot check the information wrapped in the specific perspective, we have to deal with the present text.

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39 Jer 31:26; see CARROLL, Jeremiah, 605-606; KEOWN, SCALISE, SMOTHERS, Jeremiah 26-52, 128-129; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 2, 196; K. SCHMID, Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches: Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jeremia 30-33 im Kontext des Buches, WMANT 72, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1996, 152-153; B. BECKING, Between Fear and Freedom: Essays on the Interpretation of Jeremiah 30-31, OTS 51, Leiden 2004, 69-72; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 21-36, 458; FISCHER, Jeremia 26-52, 166-167.

40 THOMPSON, Jeremiah, 577.

41 See BECKING, Between Fear and Freedom, 69-72.

42 W. BRUEGGEMANN, A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming, Grand Rapids, Cambridge UK 1998, 11.

What portrait is pictured in these 'first person reports'? The image of Jeremiah presented here is intriguing. He is pictured as a person who was personally involved in the message he had to bring which is as such a characteristic of a 'true prophet'. He is pictured as a person who is suffering from the fact that he had to bring this message of doom to the people he construes himself as a part of. He is pictured as a person who is full of emotions as regards his public appearance and the message he felt he had to convey. We do not meet a cool-hearted person who like an engineer in a factory is labouring the divine machinery as if he were not involved. As such this prophetic persona is a means of revelation.

I will illustrate this by looking at one particular passage. In Chapter 20 we read that Jeremiah is imprisoned as a reaction to his prophecies of doom (vss. 1-2):

> Now the priest Pashhur son of Immer, who was chief officer in the house of YHWH,
> heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. Then Pashhur struck the prophet Jeremiah,
> and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of YHWH.[43]

Jeremiah is released the next morning. Jeremiah answers this release with a very bitter and unconditional prophecy of doom: Jerusalem will soon be captured and its leaders will be taken away into captivity. This prophecy is also applied to Pashhur in uncompromising words:

> And you, Pashhur, and all who live in your house, shall go into captivity, and to Babylon you shall go; there you shall die, and there you shall be buried, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied falsely.[44]

After this encounter a poem written in a first person singular style is placed. Here we meet the inner world of the prophet since the emotions that were triggered by the experience of imprisonment are displayed. Moreover, it should be noted that within the composition of the Book of Jeremiah this poem (Jer 20:7-20) is the concluding pericope of the first set of oracles of Jeremiah. This implies that the poem can also be read as some sort of hermeneutic key to the first part of the collection of Jeremian oracles. The poem under consideration consists in three parts:

- Utterance of acceptance: once and again YHWH has enticed Jeremiah in his ambivalence towards his ministry to carry on despite all opposition (vss. 7-10);

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43 Jer 20:1-2; see, e.g., HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 542-543; FRIEBEL, Sign-Acts, 50, 380-381; H. BEZZEL, Die Konfessionen Jeremias: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie, BZAW 378, Berlin New York 2007, 225.

44 Jer 20:6; with HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 543-545; BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, 101-102; BEZZEL, Konfessionen Jeremias, 226.

- Exclamation of joy and faith: YHWH is with me (vss. 11-13);
- Expression of bitterness: I wish I had died in my cradle (vss. 14-20).

LUNDBOM quite adequately labelled the first stanza as 'the prison within'.[45] The prison in which Jeremiah spent the night is mirrored by a prison within where Jeremiah is bound by his struggle between two loyalties: (a) a loyalty towards his friends and his people and (b) a loyalty towards YHWH.[46] In this prison within as probably during the whole of his prophetic career, Jeremiah moves hither and tether between the two poles just mentioned:

> For the word of YHWH has become for me
> a reproach and derision all day long.
> If I say,
> 'I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,'
> then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones;
> I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.[47]

In this imbalance YHWH has forcefully enticed[48] him to keep his prophetic role. This implies that Jeremiah makes a choice to be loyal to the divine impetus. This choice leads by itself to the theme of the second stanza. In the textual unit Jer 20:11-13, YHWH is depicted with metaphors of governance:

> But YHWH is with me like a fearless warrior;
> therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail.

But YHWH is also described in terms that hint at a personal relationship between the prophet and the divine being:

> O YHWH of hosts, you test the righteous,
> you see the heart and the mind.

The encounter with this intimate but strong God that delivered Jeremiah from the prison within calls for a lyrical song of praise:

> Sing to YHWH;
> praise YHWH!
> For he has delivered the life of the needy
> from the hand of evildoers.

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45 J.R. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 1-20, AnBi 21A, New York 1999, 851-859.

46 See L. STULMAN, Jeremiah as a Polyphonic Response to Suffering, in: J. KALTNER and L. STULMAN (eds.), Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT Sup 378, London New York 2004, 309-310; B. BECKING, 'The Prophets as Persons', in: G. GLAS e.a., Hearing Visions and Seeing Voices: Psychological Aspects of Biblical Concepts and Personalities, Dordrecht 2007, 53-63.

47 Jer 20:8b-9; with M.S. SMITH, The Laments of Jeremiah and their Contexts, SBL MS 42, 23-29; BEZZEL, Konfessionen Jeremias, 232.

48 For a different understanding of the Hebrew verb פתה, see BEZZEL, Konfessionen Jeremias, 215-219, who renders it with 'täuschen'.

This summons for praise would have been a perfect ending of the Pashur-episode. If verse 13 would have been the final line of Chapter 20,[49] then this episode could easily have been labelled: 'From prison to praise'. However, the Psalm in Jeremiah 20 continues. In the beautiful, but bitter language of the last stanza word is given to an emotion:

Cursed be the day
    on which I was born![50]
The day when my mother bore me,
    let it not be blessed!

Cursed be the man
    who brought the news to my father, saying,
'A child is born to you, a son,'
    making him very glad.

Let that man be like the cities
    that YHWH overthrew without pity;
let him hear a cry in the morning
    and an alarm at noon.

[Let that day be like …][51]
    because he did not kill me in the womb;
so my mother would have been my grave,
    and her womb forever great.

Why did I come forth from the womb
    to see toil and sorrow,
        and spend my days in shame?[52]

There exists a giant leap between verses 13 and 14: from praise to depression. This giant leap has been soothed by assuming that vss. 14ff. were part of a later redaction.[53] Such an assumption, however, only postpones the problem to the redactor: how could he (or she) be so

49 As is a main trend in literary critical and redaction-historical approaches see, e.g., HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 563; SMITH, Laments of Jeremiah, 23-29.

50 On this curse and its intertextual relations with Job 3, see HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 566; TH. JACOBSEN, K. NIELSEN, 'Cursing the Day', SJOT 6 (1992), 285-295; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 1-20, 869-870; E.L. GREENSTEIN, 'Jeremiah as an Inspiration to the Poet of Job', in: J. KALTNER and L. STULMAN (eds.), Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT Sup 378, London New York 2004, 102-103; BEZZEL, Konfessionen Jeremias, 253-254; on the demonic character of 'the day' see B. BECKING, Day, in: DDD², 221-223; S.B. NOEGEL, Job iii 5 in the Light of Mesopotamian Demons of Time, VT 57, 2007, 556-562.

51 For the reconstruction of this fourth strophe see LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 1-20, 865-73; for other proposals see HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 560.

52 Jer 20:14-18; see HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 560-566; STULMAN, Jeremiah, 197-200; STULMAN, Jeremiah as a Polyphonic Response to Suffering, 310-311; BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, 165-167; BEZZEL, Konfessionen Jeremias, 215-224.

53 E.g. by HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, 548-49, and recently by BEZZEL, Konfessionen Jeremias, 215-257.

dumb to connect two unconnected pieces from the tradition? Moreover, there is no linguistic argument for the alleged literary-critical operation since both 7-13 and 14-18 are written in the same style and language. It would be better not to bring down the tension, but to see both parts of the poem as utterances of faith in tension[54], or even better: of a person in tension.

I have noticed elsewhere that Jeremiah was a person with a double loyalty, as were the prophets from Mari and Assyria.[55] This double loyalty is aggravated by the two-sidedness of Jeremiah's prophetic self-understanding. According to his prophetic call in the first chapter of the book, he was appointed:

> See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,
> to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow,
> to build and to plant.

In other words Jeremiah was not a prophet with a one-dimensional message, but a prophet who had to utter oracles of doom as well as oracles of salvation. All this leads me to the conviction that Jeremiah's prophetic consciousness provoked a distortion of the balance inside. He himself was unable to restore this balance and therefore he had to go through seasons of trustful resolution and periods of bitter alienation.

In the interaction at the edge of loyalty, revelation takes place. This picture of the life of Jeremiah mirrors the life of God. Or phrased otherwise: Jeremiah represents – and thus reveals – in an archetypal way the complete 'otherness' of YHWH.[56]

6. Conclusion: A Unique Prophetic Persona that, However, Stands in the Ancient Near Eastern Tradition

The four features discussed above have made clear that 'revelation-through-the-word' – although frequently present in the Book of Jeremiah – was not the only means of revelation according to this prophet and the tradition that both followed and shaped him. My, albeit superficial, discussion has revealed that the prophetic persona 'Jeremiah' was more

54 Thus, e.g., T. POLK, The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of the Self, JSOT Sup 32, Sheffield 1984, 152-162; BRUEGGEMANN, Exile and Homecoming, 185-187; D.L. PETERSEN, The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction, Louisville London 2002, 114-116.

55 See BECKING, Prophets as Persons.

56 See also W. BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy, Minneapolis 1997, 360-362; STULMAN, Jeremiah as a Polyphonic Response to Suffering, 310-311.

in line with the ancient Near Eastern tradition of divination in its various forms. Nevertheless, Jeremiah is in some ways a unique prophetic person which will become clear by looking at a specific feature in the Book of Jeremiah.

Both the 'historical Jeremiah' and the final redactor of the Book of Jeremiah share the view that YHWH, although a God of divine nearness, is basically inscrutable for human beings.[57] More than anywhere else in the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, RICOEUR's famous dictum is true: 'the one who reveals himself is also the one who conceals himself'.[58] This double image of YHWH, who is both sovereign and sustaining[59], is conveyed, mirrored and presented in the Book of Jeremiah in a variety of means that are characteristic for this prophet who – according to HERBERT HUFFMON – although being 'the most accessible of the prophets; […] is the most hidden of the prophets'.[60]

57 See also H. SCHRADE, Der verborgene Gott: Gottesbild und Gottesvorstellung in Israel und im Alten Orient, Stuttgart 1949; C.J. LABUSCHAGNE, The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament, POS 5, Leiden 1966, esp. 64-123; BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Old Testament; BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, 43-133.

58 RICOEUR, Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation, 93; see E. WHITE, 'Between Suspicion and Hope: Paul Riceour's Vital Hermeneutic', Literature and Theology 5, 1991, 311-321.

59 See on these attributal adjectives BRUEGGEMANN, Theology of the Old Testament, 267-313.

60 H.B. HUFFMON, Jeremiah of Anathoth: A Prophet for All Israel, in: R. CHAZAN, W.W. HALLO and L.H. SCHIFFMAN (eds.), Ki Baruch Hû': Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Baruch A. Levine, Winona Lake 1999, 261.

The Suffering of the Elect. Variations on a Theological Problem in Jer 15:10-21

HANNES BEZZEL

1. The image of Jeremiah and the 'Confessions'

Even a superficial survey of paintings which portray Jeremiah the prophet gives a good idea of the light in which he is commonly seen. Whether one turns to Michelangelo's fresco in the Sistine Chapel, to Rembrandt's canvas from 1630[1] or Chagall's lithograph from 1956 (opus 139),[2] one sees an old man with head in hand, bent down by an invisible but obviously heavy burden while his face is marked by deep wrinkles. He gives a very sad impression, and, were it not a bit impious, one therefore could easily call Jeremiah the 'Prophet of the Sad Countenance'.

Of course, this image of the lamenting prophet has something to do with the ascription of the book of Lamentations to Jeremiah according to LXX Thr 1:1.[3] Yet the ancient translators must have had their reasons for suggesting this association. They must have had in mind an image of the man from Anathoth as a lamenting prophet. In this context the short notice in 2 Chr 35:25 is normally mentioned, according to which he sang a dirge for the dead king Josiah.[4] But this answer only shifts the problem from Threni to the Chronicler. In any case, it is not unlikely that some clues for this image might be found within the Jeremianic

1 CALLAWAY regards this painting as a watershed of the Jeremiah-iconography, since it was the first to portray the prophet in a way that shifts 'the focus from external actions to inner life' (M.CH. CALLAWAY, The Lamenting Prophet and the Modern Self: On the Origins of Contemporary Readings of Jeremiah, in: J. KALTNER/L. STULMAN (Hg.), Inspired Speech. Prophecy in the Ancient Near East. Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT.S 378, New York 2004, 48-71, 53). Looking at both pictures, this kind of quantum leap between Michelangelo and Rembrandt seems to me worth discussing, though.

2 Cf. U. GAUSS et al. (eds.), Marc Chagall. Die Lithographien. La Collection Sorlier, Ostfildern-Ruit 1998, 92.

3 Cf. M.CH. CALLAWAY, Lamenting Prophet, 51.

4 Cf. I. MEYER, Die Klagelieder, in: E. ZENGER et al., Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Stuttgart ^{6}2006, 478-483, 478.

tradition, and thus primarily in the Book of Jeremiah itself. Indeed, if one reads the book from its beginning, this characterisation of the prophet seems anything but far fetched. In chapters 1-20 we hear him complain again and again: about the pains he feels, about the fate Jerusalem has to endure, and, finally, about the persecution he has to suffer himself. This last theme comes especially to the fore in the five laments found in chapters 11 to 20. Since Wellhausen[5] these have commonly been called the 'Confessions' of Jeremiah. It looks as if in these five prayers[6] the prophet allows the reader a glimpse of his most personal feelings as well as his own piety. Therefore it is not surprising that scholars in the late 19th and early 20th centuries regarded them as the most important documents for reconstructing a biography of the prophet – and even today they must not be missing from any contribution to the 'life and work'-genre, be its orientation more edifying or more scholarly.[7] However, it is in many ways highly questionable whether these prayers can offer any insight whatsoever into the historical prophet's psychic or religious condition. The fact that these texts are not independently accessible, but can only be grasped as part of the prophetic book, is simply ignored in such an approach. Regardless of whoever wrote them down at whatever time, he or she let them made a transition from the personal to the literary sphere. Having been put into writing these texts were meant to be read. Whether or not they had ever represented some actual experience of religious intimacy[8] they did so no longer. Rather, they had become a work of art instead. As such they were – at what time soever – incorporated into the book which bears the name of their speaker, turning into words of the prophet but

5 Cf. J. WELLHAUSEN, Israelitische und jüdische Geschichte. Mit einem Nachwort von Rudolf Smend, Berlin/New York [10]2003, 140.

6 The delimitation of the five units is a matter of debate. Although several pieces such as Jer 17:5-11, 12f. or some of the lamentations in Jer 2-10 might with some good reasons be regarded as belonging to the 'Confessions' in a wider sense (cf. H. BEZZEL, Die Konfessionen Jeremias. Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie, BZAW 378, Berlin/New York 2007, 142-145.266-283), here the term shall be used more narrowly of Jer 11:18-12:6; 15:10-21; 17:14-18; 18:18-23; 20:7-18.

7 Sometimes it is not easy to decide to which of the two groups a particular study aspires. For a few examples over the last decades the following may be mentioned: J. SKINNER, Prophecy & Religion. Studies in the Life of Jeremiah, Cambridge 1926; SH. BLANK, Jeremiah. Man and Prophet, Cincinatti 1961; K. SEYBOLD, Der Prophet Jeremia. Leben und Werk. Stuttgart u.a 1993; and, *mutatis mutandis*, J. KISS, Die Klage Gottes und des Propheten. Ihre Rolle in der Komposition und Redaktion von Jer 11–12, 14–15 und 18, WMANT 99, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2003.

8 Therefore it is not only an ahistorical but also an idle speculation as to whether the 'Confessions' may have been a part of a personal diary' (J. L. MIHELIC, Dialogue with God. A Study of Some of Jeremiah's Confessions, Interp. 14 (1960), 43–50, 43.

not strictly speaking prophetic words.[9] And like any act of publishing, this one too was surely guided by some intention which lies beyond biographical interest.

What is more, the very genre of the texts should make one very cautious about reaching hasty conclusions concerning the situation of the speaker or the writer. As prayers they are naturally expressed in the topical language of the psalms and as such are highly metaphorical. Any attempts to find some proof for the 'hot oriental temper'[10] of Jeremiah for example in the speaker's pleas for revenge (Jer 11:21-23; 12:3; 17:18; 18:21-23; 20:11) run the risk of ignoring this basic form-critical insight[11].

The relationship between the 'Confessions' and the psalms is taken more seriously by those exegetes who want to read them as expressions of the sentiments of a collective body. Basing himself on Robinson's idea of a corporate personality in the pre-exilic Judaean society[12] it was Reventlow who argued that the (historical) prophet would have acted as a vicarious agent in cultic worship and would have put forth his laments not for his own sake but for the people.[13] Although Reventlow was heavily criticised for his overall thesis, the idea of such a collective-representative interpretation of the prophetic prayers was broadly accepted, sometimes even in combination with an emphasis on their alleged 'liturgical nature'.[14]

The idea that Jeremiah would function as a vehicle for the pleas of others is also shared by a type of exegesis which one could call collective-exemplary. According to this school, the speaker of the 'Confes-

9 With this they seem to fit the Masoretic beginning of the book which heralds דברי ירמיהו (cf. Am 1:1) better than the Greek version which speaks of τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ ὃ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Ιερεμιαν (cf. Hos 1:1; Joel 1:1; Mi 1:1; Zeph 1:1; W. MCKANE, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah. Vol. I, ICC, Edinburgh 1986, 2 f.).

10 'Unter seinem [scil. Jeremiah's] weichen Gemüt schlummert doch das heiße morgenländische Temperament; wehe, wenn dies einmal auflodert!' (W. BAUMGARTNER, Die Klagegedichte des Jeremia, BZAW 32, Gießen 1917, 32, on Jer 11:21-23).

11 It is BAUMGARTNER'S merit to have applied GUNKEL'S form-critical categories to the 'Confessions' – but this did not prevent him at all from reading them biographically and meditating on Jeremiah's personality which he saw deeply split between the private man and the prophet (cf. BAUMGARTNER, Klagegedichte, 77).

12 Cf. H.W. ROBINSON, The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality, in: P. VOLZ/F. STUMMER/J. HEMPEL (eds.), Werden und Wesen des Alten Testaments. Vorträge, gehalten auf der Internationalen Tagung Alttestamentlicher Forscher zu Göttingen vom 4.–10. September 1935, BZAW 66, Berlin 1936, 49–62, esp. 54-56.

13 Cf. H. GRAF REVENTLOW, Liturgie und prophetisches Ich bei Jeremia, Gütersloh 1963, 258-260.

14 R.P. CARROLL, From Chaos to Covenant. Uses of Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah, London 1981, 123; cf. id., Jeremiah. A Commentary, OTL, London 1986, 278.

sions' would be none other than the 'suffering righteous one' ('Leidender Gerechter') of the psalter.[15] He would have served as a kind of role model for a postexilic pious group. Although this interpretation is mainly based on the psalm-like character of the texts with special reference to their topical language, this does not always prevent their exponents from taking questionable historicist shortcuts. These are similar to the ones which they themselves criticise the biographical-psychological readers of making, and with good reason. It happens, for example, when an attempt is made to reconstruct the theology of the assumed group's assumed enemies against whom Jeremiah the representative speaker is claimed to have been made uttering his curses some time in the Hellenistic era.[16]

Whether one dates the prayers to the 6th or to the 3rd century – the problem remains the same: The danger of succumbing to the illusion that the access to the small textual units on their own would be possible and of ignoring the fact that they are interwoven into a biblical book is immense. This is due to the heritage of the dominance of the form-critical method with its exaggerated claim that a *Sitz im Leben* could be determined not only for literary genres but for each individual text as well.

Criticism of such disregard for textual context is anything but new. As a consequence Polk turns his back on every kind of diachronic interpretation and moves toward a canonical approach.[17] But as justified as it might be to doubt the well-known impasses and implicit vicious circles of a form-critically dominated exegesis, Polk's radical answer presents its own problems. One could argue that he replaces one construct, namely that of the 'smallest literary unit' with another, that of the 'canonical shape'. The book of Jeremiah which has at least two 'canonical shapes', the MT and the LXX-version,[18] illustrates especially

15 'Jeremia ist der exemplarisch leidende Gerechte' (A.H.J. GUNNEWEG, Konfession oder Interpretation im Jeremiabuch, ZThK 67 (1970), 395-416, 399); cf. P. WELTEN, Leiden und Leidenserfahrung im Buch Jeremia, ZThK 74 (1977), 145; K.-F. POHLMANN, Die Ferne Gottes. Studien zum Jeremiabuch, BZAW 179, Berlin/New York 1989, 34; D.H. BAK, Klagender Gott – Klagende Menschen. Studien zur Klage im Jeremiabuch, BZAW 193, Berlin/New York 1990, 220.

16 Cf. K.-F. POHLMANN, Die Ferne Gottes, 63-99.

17 Cf. T. POLK, The Prophetic Persona. Jeremiah and the Language of the Self, JSOT.S 32, Sheffield 1984, for example 18.

18 The Jer-fragments of Qumran which probably belonged to six different scrolls shed new light on the relation between LXX and MT with 4QJer[a] representing the proto-masoretic text quite exactly, whereas 4QJer[b] provides evidence of a textual sequence in Jer 9:22-10:21 corresponding LXX (cf. DJD 15, 171f.). This may mean that as late as the 2nd century BCE at least two Hebrew versions of Jer could exist in parallel (cf., esp. for further literature on this issue, K. SCHMID, Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches,

well that a 'final shape' of this book did not exist at any point of history nor does it today.[19]

Both extremes, the at least latent positivistic attitude of the former form criticism on the one hand as well as a canonical reading which only pretends to be able to take up a completely ahistorical position on the other, can be avoided in a redaction critical approach.[20] The starting point of the analysis should be the text within the context of its different ancient versions. However, from such a perspective of a 'historically inquisitive synchronic reading' ('*historisch* fragende *Synchronlesung*')[21] it should be asked whether the different voices perceptible in these texts can be identified with different stages of the book's growth. In this case, it may be possible to trace the succession of different 'final forms' of the book back into its history – a succession of forms which is still perpetuating itself in the book's modern receptions and translations.

By way of illustration we will take a closer look at the second and perhaps most complex 'Confession', Jer 15:10-21.

Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30–33 im Kontext des Buches, WMANT 72, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1996, 13-23). The consequences of this theory are manyfold: Text-critically it challenges the widespread tendency to see Jer^{LXX} as the superior version or 'first edition' in general. Instead, redactional work should be assumed in *both* versions after the separation of the two (prevailing) streams of the tradition. In turn, this should make one hesitant about referring to the 'final' form of Jer.

19 Jerome's Vulgate which follows LXX for the sequence of the Biblical books but MT for the structure of Jer and for many text-critical details could be called a third canonical version – and, for example, Luther's translation a fourth one: He wants to follow the *veritas Hebraica*, but accepts the position of the later prophets from LXX and for his translation aligns himself with the church fathers. (For example, in Jer 15:19; 17:16 he takes Jerome's commentary directly into his translation; cf. H. BEZZEL, Konfessionen, 97.141).

20 Of course, speaking of a redaction-critical analysis of the 'Confessions' has been common for at least twenty years. Thus already A. R. DIAMOND, The Confessions of Jeremiah in Context. Scenes of Prophetic Drama, JSOT.S 45, Sheffield 1987, and K. O'CONNOR, The Confessions of Jeremiah. Their Interpretation and Role in Chapters 1–25, SBL.DS 94, Atlanta 1988. But on close inspection both studies appear to be based on the form-critical theorem of the small literary unit. They immediately start with the analysis of the laments themselves which for both authors are undoubtedly Jeremianic, and then, in a second step, try to explain how the surrounding material would have been written at a later stage. According to the understanding of redaction criticism as it is argued in the present essay, the exegete should take the opposite approach: start with the final form(s), deconstruct the literary history, and then reconstruct and explain the whole.

21 (O.H. STECK, Die Prophetenbücher und ihr theologisches Zeugnis. Wege der Nachfrage und Fährten zur Antwort, Tübingen 1996, 22, emphasis by STECK).

2. Jer 15:10-21 within the framework of Jer 14-16

For a reader who follows the book's order and reads through chapter 13, the prophet's lament appears to be an appropriate part of the dialogical or trialogical dispute which illustrates in highly dramatic fashion the triangular relationship between YHWH, his people and their officials, and YHWH's prophet. In its twofold alternation between human speech towards God and divine answer, 15:10-21 look like a smaller mirror image[22] of the so-called 'great liturgy' 14:1-15:4 (more precisely, 14:1-15:9).[23] In both cases there are two turns of a lament or plea,[24] followed by a reaction of YHWH.[25] But of course, the metaphor

22 Cf. G. FISCHER, Jeremia 1-25, HThK.AT, Freiburg im Breisgau 2005, 472. GITAY elucidates this observation using theatrical categories. The tension between the announcement of judgment and attempts to avert it would take place 'on two, parallel stages as in a theatre' (Y. GITAY, Rhetorical Criticism and the Prophetic Discourse, in: D. F. WATSON [ed.], Persuasive Artistry. Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy, JSNT.S 50, Sheffield 1991, 13-24, 16); cf. GERSTENBERGER who speaks of 'opposite but corresponding rôles in one drama' (E. GERSTENBERGER, Jeremiah's Complaints. Observations on Jer 15:10-21, JBL 82 [1963], 393-408, 401); see also the diagram in L. Stulman, Jeremiah, Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries, Nashville 2005, 133.

23 BEUKEN and VAN GROL emphasise the close verbal links between 15:5-9 and 14:2-6 and argue therefore very convincingly that compositionally the verses 15:5-9 should not be separated from 14:1-15:4 (cf. W.A.M. BEUKEN/H.W.M. VAN GROL, Jeremiah 14,1-15,9. A Situation of Distress and its Hermeneutics. Unity of Form – Dramatic Development, in: P.-M. BOGAERT [ed.], Le livre de Jérémie. Le prophète et son milieu, les oracles et leur transmission, BEThL 54, Leuven 1981, 297-342, 322).

24 Cf. Jer 14:7-9, 19-22 with 15:10, 15-18.

25 Cf. 14:10-12; 15:1-4 with 15:11-14, 19-21 – according to the masoretic reading. LXX takes at least 15:11 as words not of YHWH but of the prophet, giving no translation for the introductory אמר יהוה but starting with the address γένοιτο δέσποτα (cf. Vg. *fiat domine*), obviously understanding the first word as אמן. Both readings are problematic, as is the verse as a whole. Usually, 'ex more Hebraeorum אמר יהוה pertinebit ad praecedentia' (J.D.MICHAELIS, Observationes philologicae et criticae in Jeremiae vaticinia et Threnos, Göttingen 1793, 132) – as well as אמן is normally used in a reflexive way (cf. H. WILDBERGER, Art. אמן, *'mn*, fest, sicher, in: THAT 1 (1971), 177-209, 194; GERSTENBERGER, Complaints, 402, n. 36). However, both verdicts are not to be seen as absolute as it is often pretended. Talmon lends the existence of an 'introductory oath or assertion formula *'âmên*' (SH. TALMON, *Amen* as an Introductory Oath Formula, Textus 7 [1969], 124-129, 129) at least some plausibility, and except for the one instance of a divine speech being introduced simply with אמר יהוה (without כי, כה, אשר, or באשר) in Jer 46:25 (which is text-critically highly difficult in itself, too), there is at least a well documented parenthetical use of the phrase (cf. H. BEZZEL, Konfessionen, 64, n. 25), and sometimes it is difficult to decide whether the formula refers to what precedes it or what follows. Whichever decision one may accept, even in the Septuagint YHWH should be seen as the speaker of at least 15:13-14.

of a reflecting mirror should not be forced, since the differences between the passages far outweigh their macrostructural similarity. In chapter 14 it is a group that makes an appeal to YHWH, whereas the supplicant of the 'Confession' is obviously alone in talking with God.

Nevertheless, a coherent and meaningful reading of the chapters 14-15 in their present form is possible, although not only the several changes of speaker could lead to the assumption that the passage has been worked over several times. Already the beginning of the prayer in 15:10 fits perfectly into its immediate context. In his outcry the speaker formally addresses his *mother* (אוי־לי אמי) and asks the despairing rhetorical question why he has been born. In the preceding verses 15:5-6, it is the personified *Lady Jerusalem* (2fs) for whom doom is announced by YHWH, followed by an oracle of judgment which again is directed to the people as a whole (3mp). This fittingly describes the grievous consequences of its sentence, which seems to have been executed already.[26] This is done with the help of imagery taken from the family sphere, what one might call 'female' images. The people is made childless (שׁכל, 15:7), the number of its widows is immense (עצמו־לי אלמנתו, 15:8), the 'spoiler at noonday' has come upon the mothers (על־אם, 15:8). And in v. 9, in a kind of antithetic correspondance to the Hannah of 1 Sam 2:5b, [27] their common fate is subsumed under the image of the languishing woman who had once given birth to seven children. On the one hand this establishes a connection to the complaint about drought at the beginning of chapter 14 where, in 14:2, the 'gates of Judah' languish[28] and Jerusalem cries out. On the other hand, this imagery ties verses 15:7-9 more closely to the oracle of doom against the personified city of 15:5f. Last, and certainly not least, the use of the catchwords ילד and אם also provides an effective transition to the 'Confession' 15. However, in this context of lamenting and lamented women, the outcry of 15:10 is at the same time irritating, even scandalous: The supplicant does not express solidarity with the crying mothers who have been made childless and barren, but on the contrary bemoans the fact of his own birth! Nevertheless, his lament may be read as a direct continuation of the community lament in chapter 14: According to 15:18, his wound is uncurable (מכתי אנושׁה), just as is that of the 'daughter of my people' in

26 The perfect tense is used here. Nevertheless, BEUKEN and VAN GROL want to find here 'an announcement of future judgment' (BEUKEN/VAN GROL, Jer 14, 321) referring to the *perfectum propheticum* – whose grammatical existence is a matter of debate itself and in my view rather doubtful.

27 Cf. 1 Sam 2:5b עקרה ילדה שׁבעה ורבת בנים אמללה ('the barren has born seven, but she who has many children has withered') with Jer 15:9 אמללה ילדת השׁבעה ('She who has born seven has withered').

28 אבלה יהודה ושׁעריה אמללו.

14:17 (מכה נחלה מאד). With this line in mind, one is inclined to read the whole 'Confession' – as Reventlow did – as a kind of prophetic intercession in favour of the people, and thus as a revolt against the injunction of 15:1 (and 14:11). This impression is strengthened by the observation that in this wider context YHWH's second answer (15:19-21) looks like a conditional revision of his verdict in 15:1. Here, the 'standing before YHWH' has become useless even for such prominent intercessors as Samuel and Moses. In 15:19 the possibility is reopened (לפני תעמד) for Jeremiah under condition of his return.[29] Thus Jeremiah, the prophet like Moses,[30] outgrows a little his great antitype – even if nothing is said about the significance of this position before YHWH nor about his success as intermediary.

Following the divine answer, a new textual section begins with 16:1. Although the break between the two chapters is made clear by the use of the introductory formula (*Wortereignisformel*) ויהי דבר־יהוה,[31] there is also a connection with the preceding 'Confession' to be seen. Introduced by a brief report in the 1st person singular, 16:1-9 assign three symbolic actions to the prophet all of which feature a peculiarity: They could be called the total opposite of a symbolic action, since the prophet is three times instructed NOT to do something but to leave it. 'You shall not take a wife, nor shall you have sons and daughters in this place' (16:2),[32] 'you shall not enter a clubhouse[33]' (16:5),[34] and 'you

29 Cf. KISS, Klage Gottes, 115. However, this observation at the level of the final form does not necessarily imply that 15:1 is a later reaction to 15:19 or the entire 'Confession' (pace ibid., 118).

30 Cf. Dtn 18:18; Jer 1:9.

31 It is worth noting that in LXX the transition between the chapters is made much smoother. The formula is missing and the reference to the divine speaker appears postpositioned and seen in connection with 16:2a as a parenthesis: καὶ σὺ μὴ λάβῃς γυναῖκα λέγει κύριος ὁ θεὸς Ισραηλ. Thus the symbolic action is made a direct consequence of God's order to repent.

32 לא־תקח לך אשה ולא־יהיו לך בנים ובנות במקום הזה.

33 Since there is only one further bit of evidence for the nomen rectum (Am 6:7), the term בית מרזח is difficult to translate. Both the usage in Amos and the ancient versions of Jer 16:5 (LXX: θίασος, Vg.: *domus convivii*), as well as extrabiblical sources allow for the assumption that a primary semantic connection with mourning (common in most of the modern translations) cannot be taken for granted (cf. H.-J. FABRY, Art. מַרְזֵחַ, *marzēaḥ*, ThWAT 5 [1986], 11-15, 15; C. MAIER/E.M. DÖRRFUSS, 'Um mit ihnen zu sitzen, zu essen und zu trinken'. Am 6,7; Jer 16,5 und die Bedeutung von marze^{a}h, ZAW 111 (1999), 45-57, 57; S. SCHORCH, Die Propheten und der Karneval: Marzeach – Maioumas – Maimuna, VT 53 (2003), 397-415, 412; O. LORETZ, Ugaritisch-biblisch *mrzḥ* "Kultmahl, Kultverein" in Jer 16,5 und Am 6,7. Bemerkungen zur Geschichte des Totenkults in Israel, in: L. RUPPERT/P. WEIMAR/E. ZENGER (eds.),

shall not enter a house of feasting' (16:8).[35] Thus, one could speak rather of symbolic inaction. However, if read in a sequence after the 'Confession', one can hardly fail see in these three prohibitions the actualisation of what follows from the instructions which YHWH gives Jeremiah in 15:19-21. Thus, 16:1-9 illustrates what it means when the prophet is told: 'you must not return to them' (לא תשוב אלהם, 15:19). Obviously, it implies total exclusion of any form of social life, and thus complements the speaker's self-portrayal in 15:16f. There, he had underscored his absolute obedience by asserting that he never sat in the assembly of the merrymakers but had his joy in the word of YHWH.[36] Now any participation in joyful feasts is forbidden to him (16:9). With this he has to show that all these forms of common pleasure and 'the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness'[37] will come to an end soon. The connection created by the catchwords שִׂמְחָה and שָׂשׂוֹן is striking.

Although the 'Confession' appears to be linked with its preceding context and even though the subsequent symbolic action ties in with the prophetic lament as well, the overall picture which is produced by reading chapters 14-16 in this way remains ambiguous. On the one hand the complaining prophet takes up the lament of Daughter Zion (14:17; 15:18) and thus acts as an intercessor – which in the form of 'standing before YHWH' is conceded to him anew in 15:19 as a revision of the verdict from 15:1. On the other hand, 16:1-9 make it quite clear what fulfilling the required condition ('if you return I will let you return', 15:19) will mean, namely the total absence of joy and happiness not only for the prophet (15:16) but also for the people, since the latter is definitely doomed (16:4, 6f., 9). Two questions arise at this point. First, whether Jeremiah's prayer in the 'Confession' is heard or not; and second, whether he really prays in favour of the people or actually against it.

It seems possible that disparate answers to both questions are provided yet at the level of the text itself, i.e. innerbiblically, and that these different perspectives on the prophet Jeremiah have something to do with the formation of chapters 14-16. In this respect the crucial point is whether the passage 15:10-21* is older than the composition of the 'great liturgy' and the threefold symbolic actions or whether it is a later brick in the architecture of this part of the book. While a detailed analy-

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Künder des Wortes. Beiträge zur Theologie der Propheten. Josef Schreiner zum 60. Geburtstag, Würzburg 1982, 87-93, 89f.); but cf. also McKane, Jeremiah 1, 364f.

34 אל־תבוא בית מרזח.

35 ובית־משׂתה לא־תבוא.

36 Cf. 15:16: ויהי דברך לי לשׂשׂון ולשׂמחת לבבי.

37 קול שׂשׂון וקול שׂמחה.

sis of 14:1-15:9 and 16:1-9 cannot be carried out within the framework of this essay,[38] it seems appropriate to ask about the diachronic relation between the 'liturgy', the symbolic action and the 'Confession'.

For this purpose not only do the connections between 15:10-21 and its context have to be considered, but also the intertextual links will be taken into consideration which, as it were, bypass the prophetic prayer and tie 14:1-15:9* to 16:1-9. Several observations can be made.

I have argued above that the outcry of woe links 15:10 appropriately well to the verses that immediately precede with their prevailing female and maternal imagery. Apart from the harsh ironic barb of 15:10 in which the supplicant curses his birth while mothers who have become childless are weeping, the same could be said with regard to 16:2. Here the prophet is forbidden to get married so that he himself becomes a symbol of exactly those circumstances which are depicted in 15:8f. and which are further illustrated in 16:3f. In both cases the key root ילד is being used.[39]

Bridges also appear to be built to parts of the text which precede 15:5-9. Here we have the resumption of the motif of the personified Lady Jerusalem and its interpretation. According to 16:4, the victims of the punishment will not be buried but will be thrown to the birds and the beasts of the field – exactly as it was announced in 15:3 with

38 A solution to the complex character especially of chapter 14* is often sought by ascribing it to a redactor who would have combined several pieces of the Jeremianic tradition (cf. W. THIEL, Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25, WMANT 41, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1973, 180; G. WANKE, Jeremia. Teilband 1: Jer 1,1-25,14, ZBK 20.1, Zürich 1995, 140; M.E. BIDDLE, Polyphony and Symphony in Prophetic Literature. Rereading Jeremiah 7-20, SOTI 2, Macon (Georgia) 1996, 81f. BEUKEN and VAN GROL even suggest 'that Jeremiah himself, possibly together with Baruch, had a hand in this composition'(BEUKEN/VAN GROL, Jeremiah 14, 342). Instead, a redaction-critically informed assessment in terms of *Fortschreibungen* seems more plausible. The expansion of chapter 14* can be explained as a continuing chain of interpretation and reinterpretation which takes as its starting point the prophetic outcry of 14:17aβ-18a which had once been directly attached to 13:18, 19a (cf. CHR. LEVIN, Die Verheißung des Neuen Bundes in ihrem theologiegeschichtlichen Zusammenhang ausgelegt, FRLANT 137, Göttingen 1985, 154, n. 22; ibid., Das Wort Jahwes an Jeremia. Zur ältesten Redaktion der jeremianischen Sammlung, ZThK 101 (2004), 257-280, 264, n. 29; similarly K.-F. POHLMANN, Die Ferne Gottes, 129-132; see further, following both, but without a detailed delimitation of the verses in question, K. SCHMID, Buchgestalten, 330-334). From this archimedian point in 14:17aβ-18a the growth of the chapter might be explained by the gradual *Fortschreibungen* 13:20-22, 25-27; 15:5f. | 14:2-6 | 15:2b, 7-9a | 14:11-17a, 18b*; 15:1-2a, 3a, 9b* | 15:4b | 14:7-9, 19-22 (cf. H. BEZZEL, Konfessionen, 102-112).

39 Cf. 15:9 (אמללה ילדת) with the threefold specification of children, mothers and fathers in 16:3 as הילודים, הילדות and המולדים.

virtually the same wording.[40] Parallels not only obtain with regard to the consequences of divine judgment but to the causes of death. In addition to the factors 'sword' and 'famine' which are all too familiar to every reader of the book of Jeremiah, in 16:4 'deadly diseases' are also mentioned. They are not expressed with the term דבר which is typical for the trias in Jer, but with the rare word תחלואם.[41] The reader is thereby led directly to 14:18, where he not only finds the only other occurence of this term in the entire book, but also the two other causes of death from 16:4.[42] The latter verse thus reveals itself as related to the former. What the prophet was complaining about in 14:18 is announced again as something that will happen to the people. It is thus made definite.

The explanation for the symbolic injunctions in 16:5 refers back even farther to the larger section of 14:1-15:9. According to 16:5, Jeremiah is forbidden to go into a clubhouse (בית מרזח) and to mourn (נוד) with 'them'. Thus, the question addressed to Jerusalem in 15:5 who would bemoan her (מי ינוד לך) and who would ask about her wellbeing (לשלם), is answered – briefly, clearly, and in the negative: It will not be the prophet Jeremiah. In 16:5 the reason for this verdict is the withdrawal of YHWHs שלום, which in a plus in MT is additionaly qualified by the terms 'steadfast love' (חסד) and 'mercy'(רחמים).[43] As to the state-

40 Cf. 15:3b: 'to the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth to devour and to destroy' (ואת־עוף השמים ואת־בהמת הארץ לאכל ולהשחית) with 16:4: 'and their corpses shall be food for the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth' (והיתה נבלתם למאכל לעוף השמים ולבהמת). This parallel does not depend on whether MT or LXX is to be followed in 16:4; the latter offers a different word order and has no equivalent for נבלתם למאכל. The Hebrew reading obviously is geared to the comparable phrases 7:33; 19:7; 34:20.

41 Throughout the OT it is to be found only five times: Dtn 29:21; Jer 14:18; 16:4; Ps 103:3; 2 Chr 21:19.

42 Cf. 14:18: 'then behold, those slain by the sword [...] then behold, those sick with famine' (והנה חללי־חרב […] והנה תחלואי רעב) with 16:4: 'they shall die of deadly diseases [...] and by the sword and by famine they shall be consumed' (ממותי תחלאים ימתו […] ובחרב וברעב יכלו). Incidentally, this reference of the *whole* verse 16:4 to 14:18 is an argument against the popular literal-critical distinction between 16:4a and 16:4b (cf. THIEL, Redaktion I, 196). His criterion is that between both halves of the verse there should be a 'logical caesura' ('*logische Zäsur*', ibd.). This is not convincing to me. Nevertheless it is virtually the *opinio communis* to divide it as THIEL suggests (cf., among others, WANKE, Jeremia 1, 103; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 338; J. SCHREINER, Jeremia 1-25,14, NEB, Würzburg 1981, 103; C. MAIER, Jeremia als Lehrer der Tora. Soziale Gebote des Deuteronomium in Fortschreibungen des Jeremiabuches, FRLANT 196, Göttingen 2002, 125, n. 448).

43 For this word pair, cf. Ps 25:6; 40:12; 51:3; 69:17; 103:4. Since both words (and with them parts of 16:6) are lacking in LXX, they should be seen as very late explicative glosses (cf. H.-J.STIPP, Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jere-

ment itself, this corresponds to YHWH's being 'weary of relenting' (נלאיתי הנחם) which he had confessed in 15:6.

Furthermore, the redundant emphasis on the local designation 'at this place' which pervades the pericope (16:2, 3, 9) could be seen as referring back to the intercessory complaint against the false prophets of salvation in 14:13. Their foreknowledge that YHWH would bring lasting peace (שלום) to this place (במקום הזה) is purposefully thwarted by the drastic scenery of 16:1-9.

To sum up, the literary links between 16:1-9 and 14:1-15:9 relate in remarkable way to distinctly different elements of the 'great liturgy'. The mourning voice of the prophet of 14:18a is resumed as well as that of YHWH who in 15:7-9a looks back at the catastrophe which has already come about. YHWH's announcement of judgment in 15:3, motivated by his weariness of relenting according to 15:6, is also resumed. So too is Jeremiah's intercession in favour of the people, by putting blame on the false prophets in 14:13. Thus, in 16:1-9 several different Jeremianic 'voices'[44] constitute a harmonious choire. Expressed in redaction-critical terms, elements which belong to several different strata[45] are already understood as a textual amalgam.[46]

In addition, the negative finding must not be neglected that there are no terminological or thematic connections between the symbolic actions according to 16:1-9 and those components of the text which are

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miabuches. Textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte, OBO 136, Freiburg [Schweiz]/Göttingen 1994, 108). The bridge to 15:5 is not affected by this but is based on the use of שׁלום which is found in both versions.

44 For the concept of 'voices'cf. BIDDLE, Polyphony, passim.

45 Cf. above, n. 38.

46 Of course, the degree of this amalgamation depends on how one judges the redaction history of 16:1-9. Thiel, for instance, wants to keep a predeuteronomistic basis in 16:1-3a, 4a, 5-8, 9* which would have been elaborated by a few glosses only (cf. THIEL, Redaktion I, 201). MAIER on the other hand wants to make the following distinction: 16:5aα, 8* | 2, 3a, 4aα, 9 | 4aβ-5* | 6-7 (cf. MAIER, Lehrer, 126). In proposing this she takes as a starting point the command that Jeremiah shall not enter a מרזח-house or a house of joy for which no reason is given at all. Thus, she deprives the symbolic action of one of the basic features of the genre (cf. G. FOHRER, Die Gattung der Berichte über symbolische Handlungen der Propheten [1952], in: id., Studien zur Alttestamentlichen Prophetie [1949-1965], BZAW 99, Berlin 1967, 92-112, 94; id., Die symbolischen Handlungen der Propheten. 2. überarbeitete und erweiterte Auflage, AThANT 54, Zürich ^{2}1968, 35f.). But why should Jeremiah have been told not to enter a clubhouse? For this, MAIER offers no explanation. In fact, the symbolic action needs to be explained and interpreted theologically. Otherwise, it would be muted and incomprehensible. Therefore, LEVIN'S proposals seems more convincing. He sees the oldest part in 16:1-2, 9 which he calls an 'apophthegma' (cf. LEVIN, Verheißung, 169).

phrased as a lament of the people, 14:7-9, 19-22. The key terms עון and חטאת do not appear again until 16:10.

What follows then from this with regard to the 'Confession' and a diachronic analysis of its relation to the surrounding context? The observations of intertextual linkages between chapters 14-16 discussed so far can be summarised in two points:

First, 15:10-21 are certainly related in many ways both to what precedes and to what follows. Second, several lines which run from 14:1-9 to 16:1-9 are obscured by the twofold alternation of prophetic lament and divine answer in between. Without the 'Confession', there would be a consistent sequence of divine accusation, attempted prophetic intercession (subsequently prohibited), the assertion of God's wrath and its implication for the people and, finally, a command that the prophet illustrate the divine decision to bring judgment upon the people by means of symbolic actions. When 15:10-21 is included, things become more difficult. Now Jeremiah himself comes into view and the reader must ask what the lament is about and for whose benefit. Is this a continuation of his intercession or is he calling for a contrary intervention by YHWH? The distinct set of motifs that holds 14:1-16:9 together is not completely undermined by the 'Confession', but it is diverted in another direction. Now it is the consequences of a prophetic existence for the prophet himself rather than the causes and consequences of the all-embracing disaster which are in the spotlight. In view of 16:1-9, the stress is shifted from the level of interpretation to the level of the action itself, to the solitary and suffering prophet. Furthermore, 16:1-9 could be attached to 15:9 at least as smoothly as 15:10 can – and clearly better than to 15:21 as is the case now.

This compositional situation can best be explained by the assumption that 15:10-21 was inserted into its present context at a time when most of chapters 14-16 already existed. The several connections to the surrounding material pointed out above further suggest that this piece should not be seen as adopted from a separate and somewhat free floating tradition,[47] be it Jeremianic or not, but that it was written for its specific contextual setting and directly into it.

However, the question of the meaning of the 'Confession' within its context remains open, and it is even more sharply accentuated by this redaction-critical hypothesis. Why should anyone have written this

47 Pace, among others, H.-J. HERMISSON, Jahwes und Jeremias Rechtsstreit. Zum Thema der Konfessionen Jeremias [1987], in: id., Studien zu Prophetie und Weisheit. Gesammelte Aufsätze, FAT 23, Tübingen 1998, 5-36, 34; H.W. JÜNGLING, Ich mache dich zu einer ehernen Mauer. Literarkritische Überlegungen zum Verhältnis von Jer 1,18-19 zu Jer 15,20-21, Bib. 54 (1973), 1-24, 23.

poem if it made a coherent and understandable text darker and more ambiguous? To find an answer, a close look at the respective verses themselves is required.

3. Three lamenting Jeremiahs in Jer 15:10-21

An examination of the first few verses of the prayer makes it quite understandable why the exegetical guild is split up in the way it is about its interpretation. While it is obvious that the speaker of 15:10 must be a single person – at the literary level most likely the figure of the prophet –, it is difficult to say whom YHWH is addressing in his answer. In 15:11, he[48] addresses someone using the 2ms form, as it is in 15:13 and 15:14a. But in 15:14b the fire in his nose is kindled 'against you' (עליכם), a 2mp form. Furthermore, it is surprising that YHWH refers to his burning wrath (אף) while the supplicant of 15:15 pleads that God no longer hold it back. A common way to avoid this difficulty and together with it all the other problems which come along especially with 15:12, is to delete them, following Rudolph, and regard them simply as an 'undue insertion from 17:1-4'.[49] This solution leads into a blind alley, however. No matter how difficult or even impossible a translation of 15:12 may be,[50] 15:12-14 are clearly documented by *all* the ancient versions – unlike 17:1-4 which is missing in the LXX. Therefore, it would always have been more plausible to see the literal dependence going in the opposite direction as that which Rudolph suggests. Not 15:12-14 have been taken over from chapter 17, but 17:1-4 are a very late exegetical insertion (*Einschreibung*) based on Jer 15.[51] A second harmon-

48 Following MT, cf. n. 25.

49 '[E]in ungehöriger Einschub aus 17,1-4' (W. RUDOLPH, Jeremia. 3., verbesserte Auflage, HAT 12, Tübingen ³1968, 106).

50 According to DUHM, 15:12 is 'total nonsense' ('heller Unsinn') (B. DUHM, Das Buch Jeremia, KHC 11, Tübingen/Leipzig 1901, 134). Unfortunately, this could be said for the LXX-version as well as for the recensions of Aquila and Symmachus, for Vg. and TJon. It looks as if this verse was untranslatable already in those days. Nevertheless, all versions attest to a very creative way of dealing with philological problems – as do the modern conjectures (cf. BEZZEL, Konfessionen, 70).

51 Cf. B. GOSSE, Jérémie 17,1-5aα dans la rédaction massorétique du livre du Jérémie, in: EstB 53 (1995), 165-180, 171; P.-M. BOGAERT, Le livre de Jérémie en perspective: les deux rédactions antiques selon les travaux en cour, RB 101 (1994), 363-406, 386f.; id., Jérémie 17,1-4 TM, oracle contre ou sur Juda propre au texte long, annoncé(?) en 11,7-8.13 TM et en 15,12-14 TM, in: Y. GOLDMAN/CHR. UEHLINGER, La double transmission du texte biblique. Etudes d'histoire du texte offertes en hommage à Adrian Schenker, OBO 179, Fribourg/Göttingen 2001, 59-74, 62. For a discussion of the problem and a redaction-critical interpretation of 17,1-4 cf. further BEZZEL, Kon-

ising option is to read 15:13f. as an indirect salvation oracle: According to this interpretation it is not Jeremiah but rather his opponents who are addressed.[52] But other than 11:22f. no support can be found in the text for this view. Thus, it is clear that YHWH does answer Jeremiah – but at the same time addresses him as a plural group. This sounds strange, yet an explanation for this observation can be found if the topical language of 15:14 is traced back to its origins. It should not be a great surprise that the phrase 'I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you do not know'[53] sounds deuteronomistic. This formulaic expression is found in a slightly different form in Dtn 28. In Dtn 28:47f. it is a part of the curse that 'you will serve your enemies' (ועבדת־איביך) for lacking in joy in serving God. The motif of 'not knowing' is familiar from this chapter, too, even if it is here, in verse 64, combined with 'other *gods*': 'There [i.e. in the diaspora] you shall serve other gods which you have not known'.[54] The punishment fits the crime, and this theme can be found elsewhere and with the same wording.[55] Deliberate sacrilege in freedom results, correspondingly, in forced sacrilege in captivity. In this spirit the curse was taken up in the book of Jeremiah (16:13), with the motif of 'not knowing' being transferred from the gods

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fessionen, 71-85. Of course, even if one thinks that Jer 15 is dependent on Jer 17, one cannot avoid explaining the function of these verses in chapter 15, since conjuring them away would mean to exceed the limits of the text-critical method by far. For this objection against RUDOLPH cf. GERSTENBERGER, Complaints, 394; F.D. HUBMANN, Untersuchungen zu den Konfessionen Jer 11,18-12,6 und 15,10-21, FzB 30, Würzburg 1978, 209; R.M. PATERSON, Reinterpretation in the Book of Jeremiah, JSOT 28 (1984), 37-46, 41.43; H.-J. HERMISSON, Jeremias dritte Konfession (Jer 15,10-21), ZThK 96 (1999), 1-21, 4-8.

52 Cf. HUBMANN, Untersuchungen, 270; DIAMOND, Confessions 63, WANKE, Jeremia 1, 154.

53 Read with some Hebrew mansucripts and LXX והעבדתיך as in 17:4. MT and in a way also Vg. read or interpret והעברתי. This variant can be explained as a combination of two 'mistakes': On the one hand, the ד was read as an ר. On the other hand, there is a haplography of the ך or the י respectively – or one has to assume a *Vorlage* with defective writing. But this 'misreading' is shaped by intention as well. It can be seen as an interpretation with an emphasis on salvation: It is not the addressee who will have to serve the enemy, but the enemy will be made to pass away. However, Jerome wanted this to be seen a little bit different. For him, translating the preposition ב rather generously, the enemies will be brought *from* an unknown country (*et adducam inimicos tuos* de *terra qua nescis*).

54 ועבדת שם אלהים אחרים אשר לא־ידעת.

55 Cf. Dtn 11:28; 13:3, 7, 14; 29:25; 32:17; Jer 7:9; 19:4; 44:3. The formula expands the more common one which speeks merely of serving 'other gods', cf. Dtn 7:4; 8:19; 11:16; 17:3; 28:14; 29:25; 30:17; 31:20; Jos 23:16; 24:2; 24:16; Judg 2:19; 10:13; 1 Sam 8:8; 26:19; 1 Kgs 9:6, 9; 2 Kgs 5:17; 17:35; 2 Chr 7:19, 22; Jer 11:10; 13:10; 16:11; 22:9; 25:6; 35:15; 44:3.

to the country.[56] According to 14:18, even priests and prophets have to 'go to a land that they do not know'.[57] From these two thoughts it is only a small step to the idea of serving one's enemies 'in a land that you do not know' (בארץ לא ידעת) in 15:14a.

But this intertextual relationship does not yet explain the role of the respective half-verse within the framework of the 'Confession'. Again, a look towards Dtn 28 will be helpful. The enslavement imposed in 28:47 is justified in the immediately preceding verse by the accusation of a lack of 'joy and goodness of the heart' (בשׂמחה ובטוב לבב) in serving YHWH.[58] This charge can be seen as a kind of counterpart to the affirmation in Jer 15:16, in which the speaker claims that his – indeed very special – service to God always meant 'joy and delight of my heart' (לששׂון ולשׂמחת לבבי). With 14a preceding, he not only bears witness to his own obedience, but, for a reader who knows Dtn 28 well, reacts to the word of judgment in Jer 15:14 respectively Dtn 28:48, as he tries to rebut its legal basis (Dtn 28:46).

As the plural suffix of 15:14b already indicated, this intertextual bond suggests that the addressees of Dtn 28 and Jer 15:14 are intended to be the same. Thus, the individual speaker, Jeremiah, is identified with a collective entity, i.e. the people as a whole. His lamentations become a continuation and extension of those of the people in 14:7-9, 19-22 – which presumably did not yet belong to the preconfessional matrix of chapters 14-16. The same collectivising tendency can also be seen in v. 13, which continues in a subtle way the combination of the double motifs of the foe and the drought as two forms of punishment which shape the preceding chapter. This verse then joins the group of ambivalent water metaphors in the book of Jeremiah.[59] The people receive an announcement of the plundering of all their treasures (אוצרות) – but YHWH's אוצרות also mean his 'storehouses.' From here he provides the

56 'And I will cast you out of this land *into the land that you have not known, neither you nor your fathers, and there you will serve other gods* (על־הארץ אשר לא ידעתם אתם ואבותיכם ועבדתם־שׁם את־אלהים אחרים), day and night, where I will not show you favour'. Dtn 28:64 and Jer 16:13 are the only two passages which contain the idea of serving other gods as a part of the punishment.

57 סחרו אל־ארץ ולא ידעו. In addition, the phrase also occurs in 22:28, where Konja's fate is bemoaned.

58 The intertextual connections between Dtn 28:47f. and the book of Jeremiah are manyfold and obvious; cf. the 'iron yoke' of Dtn 28:48 with Jer 28:14, and the 'nation, whose language you will not understand' of Dtn 28:49 with Jer 5:15.

59 Cf., for example, Jer 2:13; Jer 14:8; 17:13; 50:7; see P.J.P. VAN HECKE, Metaphorical Shifts in the Oracle against Babylon (Jer 50-51), SJOT 17 (2003), 68-88; E.K. HOLT, The Fountain of Living Water and the Deceitful Brook. The Pool of Water Metaphors in the Book of Jeremiah (MT), in: P. VAN HECKE (Hg.), Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible, BEThL 187, Leuven 2005, 99-117.

rain[60] – or holds it back with the consequence that there will be drought and emptiness of the human 'barns' (אצרות).[61] The bemoaning of the drought according to 14:1-6 thus resonates in the subtext of 15:13, and with the concept of 'sin' (חטאת) being taken up, a factual and terminological connection to the collective lament of 14:7, 10, 20 is achieved.

What about the first half of verse 14? In this case, too, it is the rather unusual terminology which points toward Deuteronomy. The verbs 'to burn' and 'to kindle' occur in the Old Testament only nine times with יקד[62] and five times with קדה.[63] An almost word-for-word parallel to Jer 15:14b can be found in the song of Moses, in Dtn 32:22.[64] At first glance, this connection seems quite surprising. But it does reveal a certain inherent logic. In the following section (Dtn 32:34f.) one finds exactly the root-and-branch destruction by sword, famine, disease and fierce animals that is depicted in the immediate context of the 'Confession' (Jer 15:2-9). Finally, in both cases it is a sign for the universal character of the judgment that even children and sucklings are not spared: The people is 'made childless'.[65] Thus, Jer 15:14b should be regarded as an addition from the song of Moses.[66] This then confers on the collectivising voice in the 'Confession' some further remarkable colouring. If the editor(s) responsible for Jer 15:14 already had the finished composition of Dtn 32 in view, then the oracle of doom in Jer 15:13f. would not only stand for a reminiscence of the fact that all these sentences would have been announced by Moses already, but it would at the same time point to a future turn to salvation: In Dtn 32, starting at v. 35, the final vengeance on the enemies is predicted. This is just as it is in the book of Jeremiah in its Masoretic final form with the oracles against the foreign nation at the end.

From this point, an attempt can be made to shed some light on the enigmatic and almost untranslatable verses 15:11f. Whatever verse 11

60 Cf. Dtn 28:12; Jer 10:13 ‖ 51:16.

61 Cf. Joel 1:17; see also Hos 13:15.

62 Lev 6:2, 5, 6; Dtn 32:22; Jes 10:16; 30:14; 65:5; Jer 15:14; 17:4.

63 Dtn 32:22; Jes 50:11; 64:1; Jer 15:14; 17:4.

64 Cf. כי־אֵשׁ קדחה באפי ותיקד עד־שאול תחתית, 'for a fire is kindled in my nose and it burns to the lowest sheol'– in Jer 15:14 it burns 'against you': כי־אֵשׁ קדחה באפי עליכם תוקד.

65 Cf. שׁכל Piel Dtn 32:25 and Jer 15:7.

66 Cf. FISCHER, Jeremia 1-25, 506. See also W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah and Moses. Further Observations, JBL 85 (1966), 17-27, 19, who operates with an early dating of the song of Moses that should have been known to the historical Jeremiah. The interrelation between the two texts was already seen by DUHM, who, however, described the relationship in reverse order (cf. DUHM, Buch Jeremia, 143).

may have meant originally,[67] what can be said is that some action of God, qualified as something 'good' (לטוב), is contrasted to something bad in the second half, a 'time of evil' (עת רעה) and a 'time of distress' (עת צרה). One of the few references for the latter expression is found in 14:8 with its appeal to YHWH as Israel's helper in need בעת צרה. According to 15:11, YHWH himself brings about such a time, and therefore this verse can be understood as part of his dismissive answer to the people's supplication brought forward by Jeremiah.

Finally, 15:12 is even more complicated than v. 11. However, its similar collective orientation is maintained as well, simply because in the book of Jeremiah צפון is not mentioned except in the context of the 'enemy from the North'.[68] This is naturally a threat not only for the prophet as an individual, but for the community as a whole. The meaning of the verse could be something like 'will iron and bronze (i.e. you, the people, cf. Jer 6:28) defy iron from the North (i.e. the enemy)?'[69]

Thus, the entire first speech of YHWH in the 'Confession', 15:11-14, is pregnant with the idea of identifying the lamenting subject with the nation as a whole. Through these verses – as well as through those elements which add the collective note to chapter 14 (i.e. 14:7-9, 19-22) – the literary figure of the prophet is interpreted in a 'Reventlowian' way, i.e. as someone who is pleading not only for his sake, but for that of Israel. Bracketing 15:11-14 allows the reader at the same time to discover a good connecting point for the cumbersome אתה ידעת of v. 15. The reflexive character of this phrase confuses the reader of v. 15 in its final form. But it is no longer a problem when it is directly attached to v. 10. In this case it had originally referred to the declaration of in-

67 Cf. the discussion in BEZZEL, Konfessionen, 63-70. I would propose as a translation something like 'YHWH said: 'Surely, I have [released?] you for good; surely I have made the enemy meet you in a time of evil and in a time of distress''.

68 Cf. Jer 1:13, 14.15; 3:12, 18; 4:6; 6:1, 22; 10:22; 13:20; 16:15; 23:8; 25:9, 36; 31:8; 46:6, 10, 20, 24; 47:2; 50:3, 9, 41; 51:48. ROSHWALB, however, wants to understand צפון not as the point of the compass but as an epithet of YHWH by which Jeremiah in 15:12 would be awarded steadfastness as 'iron from God' (E.H. ROSHWALB, Build-Up and Climax in Jeremiah's Visions and Laments, in: M. LUBETSKI u.a. (Hg.), Boundaries of the Ancient Near Eastern World. A Tribute to Cyrus H. Gordon, JSOT.S 273, Sheffield 1998, 111-135, 130). It is not easy to follow her surname theory, especially since her initial point is a respective interpretation of Jer 1:14, where she finds '*[a] burning thornbush [...], and its appearance is like that of Ṣaphonah* (that is, like that of God's countenance)' (ibd., 122, emphasis by ROSHWALB). Amazingly enough, she claims that no foe from the North was mentioned prior to Jer 19 (cf. ibd., 114) – without any reference to Jer 4:6; 6:1, 22; 13:20.

69 Cf. BEZZEL, Konfessionen, 119-121.

nocence, stating that YHWH (or the supplicant's mother) knew the speaker's irreproachable behaviour quite well.[70]

Is there yet another trace of this collective-reading redaction of the 'Confession'? I would claim that there can indeed be found a further small addition indeed, namely the second half of v. 16.[71] It could be ascribed to the same creative hearing of the prophet's voice which underlay v. 11-14. Here we have, in terms of the lament genre, another declaration of innocence. A twofold assertion of the speaker's willingness to internalise the divine word is followed by a causal כי-clause: 'for your name is called out over me, YHWH, God Zebaoth'.[72] Admittedly, there are no obvious structural reasons which would justify the application of literary-critical principles, but an argument can be made that the content of the phrase does. It is well known that the calling out of God's name over something signifies special ownership and affiliation.[73] However, it can be observed that the idiom is never used of an individual. Instead, it is employed only in reference to a supra-individual entity: of Rabbat Ammon under siege (2 Sam 12:28), of Jerusalem (Jer 25:29; Dan 9:18f.), of the temple (1 Kgs 8:43 ‖ 2 Chr 6:33; Jer 7:10, 11, 14, 30; 32:34; 34:15). There is even one single occurence in reference to foreign nations (Am 9:12), but otherwise only to the one and special nation (Dtn 28:10; 2 Chr 7:14; Jes 63:19; and, finally, Jer 14:9). The last instance mentioned could be regarded as the key to Jer 15:16b: The prophet's lament is perceived as an extension of the people's supplication.[74] With this feature, it is perfectly in line with v. 11-14. The question of 15:5, viz., who would bemoan Jerusalem, is answered by the collective interpreting layer of 15:11-14, 16b: It is the

70 Cf. N. ITTMANN, Die Konfessionen Jeremias. Ihre Bedeutung für die Verkündigung des Propheten, WMANT 54, Neukirchen 1981, 48; further, following ITTMANN, HERMISSON, Dritte Konfession, 9. Neither author, however, takes v. 10 as a point of reference for the phrase but v. 11, which they want to read based on a conjectured LXX version as a prophetic declaration of innocence instead of a divine announcement of doom.

71 BULTMANN identifies the entire v. 16 as a 'scribal gloss' (CHR. BULTMANN, A Prophet in Desperation? The Confessions of Jeremiah, in: J.C. DE MOOR (Hg.), The Elusive Prophet. The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary Character and Anonymous Artist, OTS 45, Leiden u.a. 2001, 83-93, 90). This estimation is mainly based on his interpretation of v. 16a, where he interprets the eating of the word of YHWH as a manifestation of Torah-oriented piety as in Ps 19:11; 119:103. For a different interpretation of the phrase, see below.

72 כי־נקרא שמך עלי יהוה אלהי צבאות.

73 Cf., among others, A. WEISER, Das Buch des Propheten Jeremia, ATD 20/21, Göttingen [4]1960, 133.

74 Cf. KISS, Klage Gottes, 156.

prophet himself who pleads the city's case before YHWH and who eventually lets her and his voice melt into one.

This assumption of a redactional stratum which transformed the tone of the prayer in 15:10-21, and which can be identified and separated from its *Vorlage*, does not affect the observation that the piece in its final form(s) is a 'coherent literary unit'.[75] However, it is a unit which has a certain history and which owes its current form to more than one author.

Actually, further investigation suggests that there were more than two. It is noteworthy that, although the divine speech has already been effectively concluded with the closing formula נאם־יהוה in v. 20, it starts again in the following verse. The last verb (נצל hifil) is resumed and specified. This looks like the kind of resumption (*Wiederaufnahme*) which often marks literary seams[76] – and this, presumably, is the case here, too.[77] Obviously it was not enough to know that the speaker would eventually be redeemed. It had to be made clear from whom he would be delivered. His adversaries, mentioned rather casually in v. 15 as 'my persecutors' (רדפי), are now specified as the 'evil ones' (רעים) and the 'tyrants' (עַרִצים). Thus groups come into view which can scarcely be equated with the 'men of Anathoth' of Jer 11. However, it should be mentioned at this point that it is precisely the act of salvation which in 20:13 gives the speaker his reason for praising YHWH.[78] What did the editor(s) imagine when they added (15:21) a reference to both these groups to God's promise (15:20)? The first term is rather less illustrative in this regard. Being 'evil' is in the nature of every kind of enemy and thus is open for a wide range of possible interpretations. The second group is slightly easier to specify. In the Psalter as well as in the field of wisdom literature the 'tyrant' is one of the antonyms of the 'righteous' (צדיק)[79] and sometimes occurs in synonymous parallelism with the

75 O'CONNOR, Confessions, 41; cf. DIAMOND, Confessions, 71f.

76 LXX omits the infinitive of נצל in 15:20, thus smoothing the gap between the two verses and creating a *lectio brevior sed infirmior*. For this phenomenon in general, see LEVIN, Verheißung, 71.

77 Pace F.D. HUBMANN, Stationen einer Berufung. Die 'Konfessionen' Jeremias – eine Gesamtschau, in: ThPQ 132 (1984), 25-39, 34, who wants to cite v. 20 and v. 21 on the same literal level, but separates them both from v. 19.

78 Cf. 15:21 והצלתיך מיד רעים with 20:13 כי הציל את־נפש אביון מיד מרעים. For this reason, Ittmann argues that 15:21a was dependent on 20:13 as a 'short version' ('Kurzfassung', ITTMANN, Konfessionen, 49). This qualification is mainly based on his understanding of the basic layer of the 'Confessions' as autobiographical texts among which he counts 20:13, as well. However, I would suggest a reverse relationship, taking 20:13 as part of the collective-representative redaction (cf. BEZZEL, Konfessionen, 242-244).

79 Cf. B. KEDAR-KOPFSTEIN, Art. ערץ, *ʿāraṣ*, in: ThWAT 6 (1989), 402-405, 404.

'wicked one'(רשׁע).[80] Thus, by equating his 'persecutors' with the 'evil ones', the character of the speaker is transformed as well. He is now less Jeremiah the suffering prophet, but rather Jeremiah the suffering righteous one. From the speaker's point of view, the affliction which he bemoans in the 'Confession' first and foremost has to be seen as a specific example of that incongruity of the divine world order which can be observed everywhere: The wicked prosper while the righteous wither (cf. Jer 12:1-6).

If it was possible to call the tendency of verses 15:11-14, 16b collective-representative in a 'Reventlowian' manner, the tendency behind 15:21 could be called collective-exemplary in a 'Gunnewegian' style. It can be discovered not only in the last verse of the prayer but also in the first one (15:10).[81] Here, too, the topic is not the same as that treated in verses 15-20. While in v. 15-20 the main focus is on the relationship between the supplicant and the deity, in v. 10 (as in v. 21) the concern is with the supplicant's adversaries. Corresponding to this is the observation that the speaker's declaration of innocence does not broach the issue of suffering for YHWH's sake (as v. 15 does), nor the obedient handling of the divine word (as v. 16a), but is a metaphor taken from the field of banking and finance.[82] *This* Jeremiah does not bemoan his being a prophet, but rather the contradiction between his blameless behaviour and the negative consequences which are nevertheless emerging. He typifies this experience by using forensic terminology: To everybody he is a 'man of strife and a man of contention' (איש ריב ואיש מדון).[83]

To sum up, two modifying *relectures* of the 'Confession' have been identified. The first one (15:10, 21) frames the elder corpus and has the purpose of making the lamenting prophetic voice that of the suffering righteous one. The second one makes the figure of Jeremiah blend with the weeping Lady Zion/Jerusalem and the (true) Israel as a whole. It

80 Cf. Jes 13:11; Ps 73:35; Job 15:20; 27:13.

81 It should be noted that BAUMGARTNER already counted 15:21 and 15:10 (together with 15:11f. read according to LXX) not among the 'poems of lamentation' ('Klagegedichte') but among the so-called 'Job-poems' ('Hiobgedichte', BAUMGARTNER, Klagegedichte, 61).

82 As RUDOLPH stated, no doubt correctly, this is a field where 'possibly even a friendship goes to pieces quickly' ('auch eine Freundschaft unter Umständen rasch in die Brüche geht', RUDOLPH, Jeremia[3], 107).

83 The term מדון has its home clearly in wisdom literature. Of the 17 references in the OT, 14 can be found in Prov; one in Ps 80:7 – and except for Jer 15:10, the only other usage in a prophetic book is Hab 1:3b, also in the context of a lament about the prospering of the wicked.

does this by adding an oracle of doom in 15:11-14 and a small gloss in 15:16b.

While it is clear that both redactions transform the image of the lamenting Jeremiah in some collective way, it must be asked on what basis this development was possible. What could have been the motivation for writing the supposed primary layer of the 'Confession' into the context of chapters 14-16?

4. The suffering of the elect

Along with this question comes another which arises from some of the considerations addressed above. To support the hypothesis that verses 15:10-21 are a relatively late addition to the text (*Einschreibung*), one of the main arguments has been to highlight the smooth transition from 15:5-9 to 15:10. If, however, v. 10 (together with v. 21) is taken to belong to a later stage of redactional activity, a new – albeit older – connecting point for 15:15-20* needs to be found.

Such a link can in fact be identified and supported in at least two ways. First, the imperative 'visit me' (פקדני) in 15:15 picks up YHWHs announcement of 15:3: 'I will visit' (ופקדתי). However, the difference between these passages should not be overlooked. While at the beginning of the chapter the root פקד implies a terrible threat, for the speaker of 15:15 it is something desirable, something he prays for with all his might. In the same way his appeal refers to 14:10 as well, together with the first imperative of the clause, 'remember me' (זכרני).[84] This intertextual connection sheds some light on the problem which causes the supplicant to complain in the first place: Obviously he is not complaining about the coming of the divine judgment with all its consequences as depicted in chapters 14-15, but, on the contrary, about its delay. For him, there can be salvation only if his intercession will *not* be heard, since only the coming of God's 'visitation' would rescue him from his 'persecutors' (v. 15).

Therefore, he pleads in v. 15 that YHWH should 'no longer be patient in his wrath' (אל־לארך אפך).[85] In doing so, he begs for a suspension

84 Cf. 14:10: 'now he [sc. YHWH] will remember their iniquity and visit their sins' (עתה יזכר עונם ויפקד חטאתם) with 15:15: 'YHWH, remember me and visit me' (יהוה זכרני ופקדני).

85 Read with LXX the nominal vocalisation of ארך instead of MT's אֶרֶךְ which takes it as an adjective. The latter makes the link to the 'mercy-formula' ('Gnadenformel', H. SPIECKERMANN, 'Barmherzig und gnädig ist der Herr...' [1990], in: id., Gottes Liebe zu Israel. Studien zur Theologie des Alten Testaments, FAT 33, Tübingen 2001, 3-19, 4) even more obvious which describes YHWH as 'merciful and gracious, slow to

of some of God's main attributes as they are concentrated in the 'mercy-formula'. YHWH is addressed with a plea to act against his own nature! This sounds revolutionary, but, on the other hand, the prophet demands no more from God than God himself had declared a few verses earlier, in 15:6: 'I am weary of relenting!' (נלאיתי הנחם). The Jeremiah of the 'Confession' is simply taking YHWH at his words – at those of 15:6.

This Jeremiah is obviously not suffering in spite of but because of God's mercy. As a prophet of doom, he appears to become the more unreliable the longer he is successful as a prophet of intercession. Basically, his suffering is grounded in his special call to be a prophet of YHWH. He has been chosen against his will (cf. Jer 1:6), and as far as it depends on him, he has obediently and joyfully fulfilled his part of the obligation. Whenever there were any words of God to be found, he 'ate them' (ואכלם, 15:16). This metaphor exhibiting the willing reception of divine words is often taken in the sense of the pious praise of the Tora in Ps 19:11; 109:103. But in contrast to these passages, the focus in Jer 15:16 is not on a meditative reading and response which brings the divine word into the mouth of the speaker in a kind of ruminating way, but on their immediate absorption by the recipient. The image refers directly to Jeremiah's call. In Jer 1:9, he is designated as the prophet like Moses[86] since God himself puts his words into his mouth. Thus, the speaker of the 'Confession' ranges within the framework provided by this visionary scene and develops it further. Jeremiah ate what 'was found',[87] *ergo*, what he was fed by God in 1:9.[88] But obviously this food has turned out to be anything but joyful for its consumer. Though he

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anger, and abounding in goodness and truth' (רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב־חסד, Ex 34:6) cf. Num 14:8; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2; Nah 1:3; Ps 86:15; 103:8; 145:8; Neh 9:17.

86 Cf. Dtn 18:18.

87 The disputed Nifal נִמְצְאוּ could thus be explained as a kind of *passivum divinum*. Any speculation about a possible allusion to 2 Kgs 22 here, and about the question of whether the historic Jeremiah would have been a supporter of Josiah's reform programme, would then reveal itself as idle. Hence, HOLLADAY'S idea '[that] נמצאו in 15 16 refers to the finding of the scroll in the temple in 621' (HOLLADAY, Jeremiah and Moses, 23) in relation to which he wants to date the call of the prophet and even his 'crisis' (cf. also J. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 15,15-21 and the Call of Jeremiah, SJOT 9 [1995], 143-155, 150f.; id., Jeremiah 1-20. A new Translation with Introduction and Commentary, AncB 21 A, New York 1999, 743), leads into a blind alley (cf. CHR. BULTMANN, Prophet in Desperation, 90, n. 28). The Nifal of מצא is not sufficient for claiming an intertextual connection to 2 Kgs, nor are the fictions of the story of the prophet's call and the finding of the scroll adequate grounds for reconstructing any particular episode in the historical Jeremiah's life.

88 'And YHWH put forth his hand and touched my mouth, and YHWH said to me: 'Behold, I have put my words into your mouth''; cf. T. E. FRETHEIM, Jeremiah, Macon 2002, 238.

has accepted it from YHWH's hand with delight, it is now this very hand that is weighing on him as a burden (15:17) since he is filled with indignation.

YHWH's part of the obligation, however, would have been to support his agent and save him (Jer 1:8, 18f.). What is asserted here is that Jeremiah would have been awarded the same special divine protection that once was granted to Zion[89] and the Davidic dynasty.[90] His designation as a 'bronze wall' (חמות נחשׁת) which would remain standing while the walls of the city would break under siege (1:18),[91] had given him a kind of royal status.[92] This is the lawsuit which the supplicant of the 'Confession' brings, and consequently, YHWH, the accused, refers to the same 'legal basis'. In his answer he renews his promise to protect and save the prophet, not in the form of a salvation oracle, but, oddly enough, with a 'thus' (לכן, 15:19) which is typical for an oracle of judgment. In addition, he connects to it the condition that even the prophet must return. YHWH thus changes seats: From the dock he moves to the bench, or, as Robert Carroll puts it: 'attack is the best method of defence, even for the deity'.[93] Yet, in the end the prophet will be redeemed. His persecutors (רדפי) will stumble (cf. 15:15 with 20:11). Even if for the time being it is he who has to suffer vilification (חרפה, 15:15), they will have to bear everlasting shame (כלמת עולם, 20:11) then.

The constitutive reference of the 'Confession' to the call narrative has long been seen, and the 'sound of a second call'[94] long been heard. In my opinion, this reference also implies the answer to the question posed above. The diastasis between the prophet's special vocation on the one hand and his suffering on the other as it is depicted in the legends from Jer 20:1 onward, provoked the question of how these themes might be related. Thus, the literary figure of Jeremiah came to articulate this theological problem which he experienced with his own

89 Cf. Ps 46; 48.

90 Cf., irrespective of the question of its age, the Nathan prophecy 2 Sam 7.

91 Cf. W. WERNER, Das Buch Jeremia. Kapitel 1-25, NStK.AT 19/1, Stuttgart 1997, 41.

92 Cf. A. ALT, Hic murus aheneus esto, ZDMG 86 (1933), 33-48, 39f.; id., Neues aus der Pharaonenzeit Palästinas, PJ 32 (1936), 8-33, 10, n. 3; W. HERRMANN, Jeremia, BK 12. Lieferung 1, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1986, 84 f.; id., Die Herkunft der 'ehernen Mauer'. Eine Miszelle zu Jeremia 1,18 und 15,20, in: M. OEMING/A. GRAUPNER (eds.), Altes Testament und christliche Verkündigung. Festschrift für Antonius H. J. Gunneweg, Stuttgart 1987, 344-352, 351.

93 R. CARROLL, Jeremiah, 334.

94 J. BRIGHT, Jeremiah, AncB 21, Garden City 1965, 112; cf. G. VON RAD, Theologie des Alten Testaments. Band II. Die Theologie der prophetischen Überlieferungen Israels, EETh 1, München 1960, 214.

body, and became the paradigmatic[95] suffering prophet of the 'Confessions'. This figure illustrates the problem of theodicy. The unique case of an artificial biography of a prophetic elect serves this purpose. Hence, this first interpretation of the prophet's persona could be called a biographical-theological one. However, it includes the particular aspect that it is based already on a βίος, which has itself acquired a highly interpretative character. Perhaps one could speak of a derivation of a derivation.

Having developed into a paradigmatic character, this Jeremiah and his prayer are open for further reinterpretation. Two redactional stages can be traced in the text. The first subsequent redactor adds the framework consisting of 15:10, 21. The lamenting prophet is thereby clothed with the garment of the suffering righteous one. The issue of the 'suffering of the elect' is broadened, and in some way, Jeremiah has come to serve as a role model. However, while the idea of a group of pious people identifying themselves with the pain of this redaction's literary prophet has gained wide currency, it does not seem altogether appropriate to me. How far can it be claimed that these people could have derived comfort from the figure of the suffering Jeremiah as WELTEN and others suggest?[96] This would imply that the prophet's sorrow would have acquired some kind of soteriological quality which would enable the concept of an *imitatio*. It is difficult to find evidence for this in the text.[97] I would rather claim that within this collective-exemplary reading the issue of identification works the other way round. Jeremiah the suffering elect is the subject of the identification, not its object. He identifies vicariously with the sorrow of the readers by giving it words

95 VON RAD already ascribed the suffering of the (historical) Jeremiah a 'paradigmatic meaning for all Israel' ('paradigmatische Bedeutung für ganz Israel', G. VON RAD, Theologie II, 216), similarly BLANK: '[H]e [sc. Jeremiah] made himself a paradigm' (SH. H. BLANK, The Prophet as Paradigm, in: J.L. CRENSHAW/J.T. WILLIS [eds.], Essays in Old Testament Ethics. J. Philipp Hyatt in Memoriam, New York 1974, 111-130, 113).

96 Cf. P. WELTEN, Leiden, 147; T. POLK, The Prophetic Persona. Jeremiah and the Language of the Self, JSOT.S 32, Sheffield 1984, 171. Stulman thinks that Jeremiah's 'suffering service [...] and utter trust become a model of faithful living' (L. STULMAN, Jeremiah as a Polyphonic Response to Suffering, in: J. KALTNER/L. STULMAN (eds.), Inspired Speech. Prophecy in the Ancient Near East. Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT.S 378, New York 2004, 302-318, 310). This interpretation too easily flattens the typically prophetic features as well as the radical desperation which is articulated in 20:14-18 (which in STULMAN'S opinion is to be interpreted on the same level as the other 'Confessions').

97 '[E]s fehlt jede Märtyrerverherrlichung, aber auch jeder Gedanke an eine Imitatio' (G. VON RAD, Die Konfessionen Jeremias [1936], in: id., Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament. Band II, TB 48, München 1973, 234).

and adressing these words in the form of a lamenting accusation to YHWH.

In a subsequent *relecture*, another redactor moves towards a broadening of the image of Jeremiah yet a step further by adding 15:11-14, 16b to the prayer. Had Jeremiah once purposefully been cast as opposing the city and the nation,[98] he now acts as its mouthpiece. At this (final) stage of the textual development the 'suffering of the elect' means first and foremost the suffering of the chosen people, the (true) Israel. For these redactors, the 'uncurable wound' (מכה אנושה) which the speaker bemoans in 15:18, refers to the 'very grievous blow' (מכה נחלה מאד) which the prophet (or, according to 14:17a, YHWH) had lamented so vividly. It stood to reason to hear the voice of the mourned 'daughter of my people' herself (בת־עמי) speaking in the 1st person singular of 15:18. Her wound which had to be seen as the just punishment for her apostasy (cf. Jer 30:12) will in the end be cured by YHWH (cf. Jer 30:17),[99] and her 'persecutors', the foreign nations, will receive retribution as it is spelled out from chapter 46 (MT) onwards.

Together with the passages found in 14:7-9, 19-22, which bring the voice of the people into the pericope 'concerning the drought' (14:1), these verses shape the famous 'great liturgy' which in the end reaches from 14:1 to 15:21.

The end of the redactional process still leaves the interpretative process open. The Jeremiah of the 'Confession' is not simply to be identified with his latest manifestation. Even the collective-representative figure retains the characteristics of the biographic-theological one. This inherent 'multiplicity of meaning, polysemousness'[100] makes the prophetic figure available for the multifaceted interpretations it has undergone in the course of its reception and which continue to this day. The question of how election and suffering might be reconciled is still open.

98 Cf. Jer 1:18.

99 Cf. 30:12: 'Your bruise is incurable, your wound is severe' (אנוש לשברך נחלה מכתך) with 30:17: 'and I will heal your wounds' (וממכותיך ארפאך); cf. SCHMID, Buchgestalten, 344.

100 POLK, Persona, 166.

Jeremiah *epigrammatistes*. Towards a Typology of Prophecy in Jeremiah

CHRISTOPH BULTMANN

To speak of Jeremiah as an epigrammatist is a convenient way of evading the intricate question of what kind of religious specialist he was. There can hardly be any doubt that divination or some other forms of communicating a divine message were a major issue in the religious culture of ancient Judah, and there may well have been specialists who performed an official function in divination just as there were specialists for ritual sacrifice.[1] In a recent study of Isaiah, it has been suggested that we should read Isa 6:1-8* plus 8:1-4* as the original core of the Isaianic tradition: the prophetic speaker has a visionary experience in the temple, accepts a divine commission ('Here am I; send me!'), and then comes up with a message related to a specific political crisis, a message furthermore which shows the prophet engaged in religious triumphalism: the enemies will be destroyed ('Maher-shalal-chash-baz'). The message is then inscribed onto a large tablet and confirmed by a symbolic act which involves a further cultic official, a נביאה.[2] With regard to the book of Jeremiah a similar picture of the political prophet may be said to unfold: Thus it has been claimed that a critical reconstruction of the text behind the fully developed text of Jeremiah 30-31 would show that Jeremiah supported 'Josiah's efforts to return the territory and people of the former northern kingdom of Israel to Davidic rule.'[3] However, it is not the prophetic activist Isaiah with his writing onto an advertising board who has inspired my use of the term 'epi-

1 For a general survey see JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP, Sage, Priest, Prophet: Religious and Intellectual Leadership in Ancient Israel, Louisville, KY, 1995. BLENKINSOPP suggests the notion of 'dissident intellectuals' for describing the social role of at least a certain type of prophets during the time of the monarchies (p. 144).

2 UWE BECKER, Jesaja – von der Botschaft zum Buch, Göttingen 1997, esp. pp. 94-102.

3 MARVIN A. SWEENEY, 'Jeremiah 30-31 and King Josiah's Program of National Restoration and Religious Reform,' in: ZAW 108, 1996, pp. 569-583 (quotation on p. 582); note also the reference to an article by NORBERT LOHFINK of 1981 ibid. p. 569 n. 3. An alternative view has been put forward by KONRAD SCHMID, Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches: Untersuchungen zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30-33 im Kontext des Buches, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1996, pp. 110-196.

grammatist', and there is, of course, also some route which leads from Isa 8:1-4 to Isa 1:21-25 on Jerusalem as a once 'faithful city' within the book of Isaiah – and on from there to Jeremiah 5:1-6 on faithfulness and justice in Jerusalem.[4] Leaving historical hypotheses about the religio-political official functionary aside, my suggestion is to start from individual texts and to contrast the typical figure of an epigrammatist with all those prophetic diviners for whose existence and function and practice and reputation we may or may not have positive evidence in the biblical and extra-biblical tradition. In the narrative world, Zedekiah, for example, is elegantly portrayed as a king who knows a prophet to consult for an oracle in Jer 37:17!

What I would like to adopt as a starting-point for a study of Jeremiah is the assumption that here there was someone who employed language in an elaborate, even artistic way in order to give expression to his observations on and interpretations of the state of society in Judah in his own time. Any reader will be aware that there is nothing new or original about this approach and may recall GRAEME AULD's examination of the designation of prophets in the biblical texts which led him to acknowledge their character as poets. According to AULD, 'the inherited suggestion that these poets were "prophets" in their own eyes or in the eyes of their contemporaries' should be discounted, and this as a 'simple issue of archival accuracy.'[5] I am not quite sure if ROBERT WILSON is right when he claims that according to this view 'the prophetic books should be seen as literary works […], and should be analysed as such without any attention being given to their hypothetical literary histories.'[6] My own view is that it remains an interesting and promising enterprise to speculate about the intellectual culture in which individual poetic (or other) utterances originated. Whether prophets or poets, these speakers and scribes must have lived among some competent contemporaries, and therefore the challenge is there to

4 On Isa 1:21-25(26) see HUGH G. M. WILLIAMSON, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 1-27. Vol. 1: Commentary on Isaiah 1-5, London 2006, pp. 120-146; on Jer 5:1-5(6) WILLIAM MCKANE, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah. Vol. 1: Introduction and Commentary on Jeremiah I-XXV, Edinburgh 1986, pp. 114-117.

5 See A. GRAEME AULD, 'Prophets through the Looking Glass: Between Writings and Moses,' JSOT 27, 1983, pp. 3-23; reprinted in: The Prophets, ed. by PHILIP R. DAVIES, Sheffield 1996, pp. 22-42; also in: A. GRAME AULD, Samuel at the Threshold: Selected Works, Aldershot 2004, pp. 45-61. The quotation above is from AULD's subsequent response to a discussion of this article: 'Prophets through the Looking Glass: A Response to Robert Carroll and Hugh Williamson,' JSOT 27, 1983, pp. 41-44 (41); The Prophets, 1996, pp. 57-60 (57).

6 ROBERT R. WILSON, 'The prophetic books,' in: The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation, ed. by JOHN BARTON, Cambridge 1998, pp. 212-225 (222, with n. 20).

reflect on the cultural constellations into which they belonged.[7] Obviously, speaking of a poet or an epigrammatist will not solve the problem of such a figure's historical context at a stroke. However, while this question can remain open for the moment, my claim is that the notion of 'epigram' can help to bring certain texts in Jeremiah into focus which deserve more attention than they normally receive.

One of the most famous examples of short, closed textual units in Jeremiah is at 13:23:

> 'Can [Cushites] change their skin or leopards their spots?
> Then also you can do good who are accustomed to do evil.'[8]

Without going into any detail about the critical analysis of the literary context, I take it that the verse can be considered on its own and understood as a poetic unit of epigrammatic brevity. While no material is known from ancient Judaean culture which would allow to reconstruct a literary history of the epigram, in Greek culture the 'epigram' as a short poetic composition started its career as an inscription on some consecrated item or sepulchral feature, and from there developed into a literary genre which had a rich history in high and less high Greek and Roman art from Kallimachos in the early 3rd century B.C.E. through Martial in the late 1st century C.E. Alluding to this poetic genre just means trying to direct attention to the poetic force of lines like the ones just quoted. With regard to the Greek tradition, KATHRYN GUTZWILLER in her book *Poetic Garlands: Hellenistic Epigrams in Context* of 1998 offers the following definition of an epigram: 'As a statement that must define its subject for all time, and in a form short enough to be engraved on stone, the epigram developed the distinctive traits not only of brevity and restraint but also of appearing to have the last word.' Therefore, GUTZWILLER goes on, 'The reading of an epigram book is a process of continually seeing its subjects briefly but whole, of ending and ending again.'[9] Thus brevity and restraint, evocative power, a sharp tone of definitive judgment, and a strong closural effect would characterize the epigram, and further observations could be made on the internal structure and on the suspense that is created between successive lines.

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7 See JOHN BARTON's comment on Isaiah of Jerusalem: 'a far from shadowy figure, and one of the sharpest intellects among ancient Israel's not inconsiderable thinkers,' in: Isaiah 1-39 (Old Testament Guides), Sheffield 1995, p. 9.

8 NRSV translation. See MCKANE, l.c., pp. 306-314, who cautiously suggests to read a textual unit 13:20-22 and 25-27 with 23-24 as an insertion.

9 KATHRYN J. GUTZWILLER, Poetic Garlands: Hellenistic Epigrams in Context, Berkeley 1998, introduction, pp. 1-14 (8), see also the outline of the process through which epigrams became literary texts, ibid. pp. 47-53.

Needless to say that the more artistic literary compositions in this genre can consist of several lines; brevity is not all.

Most of the characteristics mentioned can be identified in Jer 13:23: brevity (in spite of the reduplication of the rhetorical question), evocative power (the Cushite, the leopard), a tone of definitive judgment, of 'appearing to have the last word.' Even the feature of a direct address which we find in the second line of the poem is familiar from epigrams in the classical tradition, be it as a fictive address to a passer-by on some monument or tombstone, be it as a teasing address to some individual in Martial's polemical effusions. My intention in pointing out such stylistic aspects is not to suggest any close parallels between poetic texts from vastly different areas and periods. The main purpose of considering such aspects is to see how the potential of language was explored and exploited by poets in different cultures in antiquity and thus to sharpen a sense of the individual poetic achievements which we encounter in the biblical texts.

A few more examples may help further to illustrate the epigrammatist's work. In Jer 8:22 we find the following:

> 'Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?
> Why then has the health of my [...] people not been restored?'[10]

As with 13:23, there is no reason why 8:22 should not be read on its own. The internal structure of the poem can be compared to that of 13:23 as can the somewhat erudite tone. The poet's emotional engagement, on the other hand, is rather dissimilar in comparison with the former epigram. Whereas in the one case he speaks as a disillusioned moralist, in the second case he is concerned about a perpetual crisis, if not even a disastrous political situation. The reader will, of course, feel reminded of the poet's polemics against those religious specialists who 'treat the wound of my people' 'carelessly' (על-נקלה) and who boast of privileged access to the divine council without returning from there with a message of moral exhortation (Jer 6:14 and 8:11; 23:22).[11]

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10 NRSV translation, cf. MCKANE: 'Why do my people's wounds not close and heal?' McKane, l.c., pp. 193-197 suggests to read a textual unit 8:18-23 with only 8:19b ('why ...') as a secondary addition.

11 In addition to the commentaries, see JÜRGEN HERMISSON, 'Kriterien "wahrer" und "falscher" Prophetie im Alten Testament: Zur Auslegung von Jeremia 23.16-22 und Jeremia 28.8-9,' in: ZThK 92, 1995, pp. 121-139; reprinted in: id., Studien zu Prophetie und Weisheit: Gesammelte Aufsätze, Tübingen 1998, pp. 59-76, for a critical analysis of Jer 23 in terms of oracular prophecy. HERMISSON considers 23:22 to be a statement by some deuteronomistic scribe and rejects the hypothetical possibility that it might have been an independent (Jeremianic) pronouncement (p. 128-9 and p. 66 respectively).

For a third example I would like to refer to Jer 4:30:

> 'And you [...], what do you mean
> that you dress in crimson,
> that you deck yourself with ornaments of gold,
> that you enlarge your eyes with paint?
> In vain you beautify yourself.'

(followed by what may be an exegetical gloss, based on Ezekiel: 'Your lovers despise you; they seek your life.')[12] Stylistically even more successful than the previous examples in 13:23 and 8:22, this poetic composition with its strong ending (לשוא תתיפי) again addresses a dangerous crisis which is not understood by the poet's contemporaries. I would again suggest that it is more plausible to call this pronouncement an 'epigram' rather than an 'oracle,' since the speaker is engaged neither in scrutinizing the divine will nor in predicting future events. When emphasizing this point, however, I am not subscribing to KARL-FRIEDRICH POHLMANN's hypothesis which says that what lies at the origin of the tradition of Jeremiah are a number of laments which conjure up a dark political horizon without any sense of divine causality or of corruption of Judaean society.[13] It seems highly unlikely to me that within the religious culture of his time the poet would not have been aware of the standard motif of divine anger (a critical analysis of Jer 4:8 would be relevant at this point), and I also doubt that we ought to imagine the poet as someone who just had a presentiment of doom without reflecting on the issue of ethics.

With this let me come to my last example and finally address the almost paradoxical problem of the 1st person singular of the divine voice in non-oracular poetry. In a study of Jeremiah 15:15-19, I tried to read Jer 15:19 ('If you utter what is precious, and not what is worthless, you shall serve as my mouth') as a document of the speaker's poetic self-authorization.[14] HANNES BEZZEL will, I suppose, convince me at some stage that this reading rests on completely mistaken presuppositions.[15]

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12 NRSV translation. See MCKANE, l.c., pp. 111-113, who suggests to read a textual unit 4:30-31. McKane deletes שדוד as a gloss.

13 KARL-FRIEDRICH POHLMANN, 'Unheilsahnung und Unheilsklage: Ein Versuch zur Frage nach den Anfängen der Jeremiatradition,' in: id., Die Ferne Gottes – Studien zum Jeremiabuch, Berlin 1989, pp. 113-213. POHLMANN's view has been accepted, e.g., by KONRAD SCHMID, Literaturgeschichte des Alten Testaments. Eine Einführung, Darmstadt 2008, pp. 128-131.

14 CHRISTOPH BULTMANN, 'A Prophet in Desperation? The Confessions of Jeremiah,' in: The Elusive Prophet: The Prophet as a Historical Person, Literary Character and Anonymous Artist, ed. by JOHANNES C. DE MOOR, Leiden 2001, pp. 83-93.

15 HANNES BEZZEL, Die Konfessionen Jeremias: Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie, Berlin 2007, esp. pp. 60-136.

However, let me just reassert my claim that I do not in principle regard it as impossible that the epigrammatist also employed the 1st person of the divine voice. Thus in my last example in Jer 4:22 (Jeremiah's version of Isaiah's 'ox and ass' poem in Isa 1:2-3):[16]

> '[...] My people are foolish, they do not know me;
> they are stupid children, they have no understanding.
> They are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do good.'[17]

The topic here is the same as in Jer 13:23, and again the poet presents himself as a moralist. This time, however, the issue of religious understanding is directly addressed.[18]

A concluding remark on hermeneutics is in order: The Jeremianic tradition must not simply be subsumed under categories such as divination (from some history-of-religion perspective) or a divine commission of a prophet (from some canonical-approach perspective). While in a comprehensive typology of prophecy in Jeremiah all these aspects would have to be assigned their proper place, there still is this blunt element of observation and exasperation expressed in epigrammatic poetry, and in the encouraging or not so encouraging company of priests and prophets in ancient Judah we also find the alert moralist. In 18th-century parlance, there are not only reminiscences of positive religion in the book of Jeremiah, but some traces of natural religion as well.[19]

16 See WILLIAMSON, l.c., pp. 22-35.

17 NRSV translation. See MCKANE, l.c., pp. 102-106, who seems to suggest to read a textual unit 4:19-22, but states, correctly in my view, that 'there is no intrinsic or original connection' between 4:22 and 4:19-21 (105).

18 For further comments on Jer 5:1-6 and 8:4-9 see CHRISTOPH BULTMANN, 'Patterns or Poetry in Jeremiah? Introducing a Reader to the Twin Poems in Jer 5 and 8', in: The Centre and the Periphery: A European Tribute to Walter Brueggemann, ed. by DAVID J. A. CLINES; ELSE K. HOLT and JILL MIDDLEMAS, Sheffield, forthcoming.

19 See JAMES BARR, Biblical Faith and Natural Theology, Oxford 1993, on the prophets esp. pp. 94-5. A helpful survey of 18th-century ideas is PETER BYRNE, Natural Religion and the Nature of Religion: The Legacy of Deism, London 1989, see also his The Moral Interpretation of Religion, Edinburgh 1998, introduction, pp. 1-18.

Jeremiah among the Social Anthropologists

LESTER L. GRABBE

One of the features that makes the book of Jeremiah interesting is the fact that it contains not only a great deal of prophetic speech/writing but also a good deal about Jeremiah's actions. We know not only what Jeremiah supposedly said but also what he supposedly did. The narratives about how Jeremiah acted and interacted with those around him are the sections of the book most useful for cross-cultural comparisons. This allows us to look at ancient Israelite prophecy as social anthropologists might look at prophecy in a contemporary society.[1] I have picked several themes from the book of Jeremiah for comparison with anthropological studies of prophetic figures in other cultures. My aim is to ask whether social anthropology helps us to better understand the model of the prophet as found in the book of Jeremiah.

Themes from Jeremiah

1. Prophetic Teaching/Message

The Israelite prophets are often thought to have a unique message, usually expressed in some version of Wellhausen's term 'ethical monotheism'. Jeremiah specifically has a message that includes many different elements: cultic criticism (idolatry, polytheism: 2; 9:12-15; 10:2-16; 17:1-4; 19); Sabbath observance (17:19-27); 'enemy from north' (4:5-9; 6; 10:17-22), 'remnant' (3:14; 6:9; 15:11; 23:3), criticism of prophets (5:13-14, 30-31; 6:13-15; 14:10-16; 23:9-39; 28), covenant (11; 22:8-9; 31:31-34), and so on. This also includes what in modern terms we would call social

1 One can debate the historicity of the description (cf. L.L. GRABBE, 'The Lying Pen of the Scribes'? Jeremiah and History, in: Y. AMIT, E. BEN ZVI, I. FINKELSTEIN, and O. LIPSCHITS (eds.), Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context: A Tribute to Nadav Na'aman, Winona Lake, in: Eisenbrauns, 2006, 189-204). But the important assumption is that the story of Jeremiah depicted the persona of an Israelite/Judahite prophet that was realistic.

and moral criticism (7:5-9). That element is smaller to a surprising degree than one might expect, but it is there.

We have plenty of examples in which prophetic figures in other cultures have ethical messages, with teachings very much parallel to those of Jeremiah. For example, the anthropologists JOHN BEATTIE and JOHN MIDDLETON note this about various mediums, including prophets:

> Associated with these social aspects of mediumistic cults is their moral quality. We noted above that traditional cults are usually thought of as beneficial, and their mediums much respected; we noted also that participants in cult activity are generally required to be pure in heart and on mutually good terms. But, in addition, the spirits themselves are often represented as giving advice, warnings, or directions bearing explicitly on the moral order of the society. Basangu spirits express public opinion; Korekore mediums mediate in disputes and reflect the consensus of the community; possessing spirits in Ghana 'demand goodness'.[2]

A second example concerns the Nuer prophet Kolang Ket:

> Kolang [Ket] offered a full range of prophetic services. He cured the ill; he sacrificed against smallpox, chicken pox, and cattle diseases; he advised people to stop fighting among themselves; he denounced the use of magic and told people not to sacrifice to useless Powers.[3]

A Native American example involves a moral preaching that was oblivious of what others might think. This was the teachings of the Seneca prophet Handsome Lake.[4] For the most part, his message was welcomed by those whites (such as the Quaker Halliday Jackson) who observed his community which was trying to come to terms with the changed circumstances of the Seneca people in New York state around 1800. His message was not necessarily a popular one but called for repentance and a change of life on the part of hearers. He preached against the evils of alcohol, which had so devastated his people. His message was a moral one and helped the people adjust to the new social and economic changes in the community, especially the change from a hunter-gatherer society to an agrarian one. The values he espoused were those necessary for the restraint and control of a society

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2 The Introduction to J. BEATTIE and J. MIDDLETON (eds.), Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa, London: Routledge, 1969, xxvii.

3 D.H. JOHNSON, Nuer Prophets: A History of Prophecy from the Upper Nile in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Oxford Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford: Clarendon, 1994, 250.

4 For information on him see A.F.C. WALLACE, Halliday Jackson's Journal to the Seneca Indians, 1798-1800, Pennsylvania History 19, 1952, 117-147, 325-349; idem., The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca, New York: Random House, 1969; E. TOOKER, On the New Religion of Handsome Lake, Anthropological Quarterly 41, 1968, 187-200.

based on the plough, and those he opposed were the characteristics of independence and individualism important to the old way of life.

2. Criticism of and Opposition to the Established Government

Scholars have often commended biblical prophets as opponents of the contemporary government, perhaps forgetting that many supported the government (e.g., Nathan and David; Isaiah and Hezekiah). On the other hand, we have many examples of prophetic figures and movements in history that opposed the government in power. This is well known in the colonial context where prophetic figures have not only spoken out against the ruling power(s) – and sometimes even the dominant culture – but also provided moral and prophetic support to resistance movements. To give a couple of examples, through much of 20th century Rhodesia traditional spirit mediums were 'inherently radical, inevitably opposed to the colonial state'.[5] Both chiefs and mediums derived their power and authority from the royal ancestral spirits known as *mhondoro*. The colonial powers had disrupted the traditional chieftainship, by giving the office to those who showed loyalty and dismissing those regarded as untrustworthy. The result was that the people tended to look on *mhondoro* mediums for leadership. When guerrilla movements arose, they found it important to obtain the approval of *mhondoro* mediums.

Similarly, a number of the rebel groups that arose in Uganda during the 1980s and 1990s were led by spirit mediums, such as Alice Auma.[6] She arose to prominence in the Ugandan civil war that developed between the army that liberated Uganda from Idi Amin's grip and another group called the National Resistance Army. The National Resistance Army won out but sent soldiers to occupy the region of Acholi where Alice lived. She had previously worked as a healer but began to organize resistance to this new government in the shape of the 'Holy Spirit Mobile Forces'. She was able to do this because she was possessed by a variety of spirits who formed a hierarchy that lent itself to military command. The spirits would take possession of her before a

5 D. LAN, Guns and Rain: Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1985; the quotation is from p. 178.

6 H. BEHREND, Alice Lakwena and the Holy Spirits: War in Northern Uganda 1986-97, Eastern Africa Studies, Oxford: James Currey, 1999; idem., Power to Heal, Power to Kill: Spirit Possession and War in Northern Uganda (1986-1994), in: H. BEHREND and U. LUIG (eds.), Spirit Possession: Modernity and Power in Africa, Oxford: James Currey, 1999, 20-33.

military action, and a clerk of the spirit would translate and record Alice's words. She freed the soldiers from the threat of witchcraft and evil spirits and promised protection again enemy bullets. After a couple of years, with some remarkable successes, her army was defeated. She herself fled to Kenya and was seen sitting at a bar, drinking gin and Pepsi, her spirits having abandoned her. She finally died on 17 January 2007.

The Native American resistance against American incursions into their lands in the late 18th century was led by a gifted leader named Tecumseh; however, he was supported by his brother the prophet Tenskwatawa.[7] Since the Shawnee Indians were nominally under the authority of the Washington government, they were considered rebels against established authority (though the British thought otherwise and provided a certain amount of military aid – not always reliable – in the Shawnee efforts to fight the Americans).

3. Prophetic Conflict

Prophetic conflict is described in several passages in the book of Jeremiah (e.g., Jer 23:9-39; 28). Like other biblical passages, the book presents prophetic interaction in terms of 'true prophets' versus 'false prophets'. The terms 'true prophet' and 'false prophet' are not used in the text, of course, at least not in the MT, though the Greek versions do actually speak of προφῆται and ψευδοπροφῆται (e.g., LXX Jer 35:1 [equivalent to MT 28:1] refers to Hananiah as a 'false prophet'). But the Hebrew text is generally fairly clear about who is a true prophet and who is a false prophet. This of course represents the biased view of the textual compilers and cannot be taken as a disinterested description. A proper description is the anthropological one: 'prophetic conflict'. In many societies with prophetic figures, competition and conflict are endemic. We can consider two examples.

Prophetic rivalry is well documented among the Nuer, a people living along the upper Nile, in the first half of the 20th century. We know quite a bit about the prophet Ngundeng Bong who was born in the mid-19th century among the Lou, a branch of the Nuer people.[8] Ngundeng is best known for using his office to organize the building of a large earthen mound in the centre part of the Lou territory where he had made his home. This mound served as a symbol of his authority,

7 J. SUGDEN, Tecumseh: A Life of America's Greatest Indian Leader, New York: Random House, 1997.

8 JOHNSON, Nuer Prophets, 73-125.

and his patron divinities were said to dwell in it. Ngundeng enlisted certain prophets, diviners, and magicians among his spiritual assistants, though he condemned and tried to suppress magic outside his circle, with some success. He accepted the existence of some distant prophets but generally opposed those nearby. His favourite method was to ridicule them in verse and song. Another way was to make personal predictions about them, which would show his superiority when the prediction was fulfilled. When prophets actually visited him, he sometimes challenged them to run up the side of his mound, a strenuous physical feat that Ngundeng was able to do. One prophetess accepted the challenge, faltered half way up when her divinity disappeared into the mound, and was given to one of Ngundeng's assistants to grind grain and sleep with. This is one way to deal with rivals, keeping in mind that Jeremiah is credited with having God kill one of his opponents (Jer 28:16-17), while Amos condemns a rival's wife to all the degradations of captivity (Amos 7:18).

The next example involves two spirit mediums in Rhodesia-Zimbabwe who became involved in the war of independence in 1960s and 1970s.[9] The older medium, named George Kupara, was born around the turn of the century and claimed his authority in connection with the *mhondoro* Mutota. Both chiefs and mediums derived their power and authority from the royal ancestral spirits known as *mhondoro*. The power of a particular spirit was believed to relate to its place in the genealogical hierarchy and to the territory conquered or controlled by the chief in life. Mutota was a powerful spirit. The other medium was Enosi Pondai who looked to the *mhondoro* Chiwawa, a spirit in theory below Mutota in the hierarchy but in many ways rivalling him in position. Pondai had come to Kupara for approval as a medium in the 1950s but had been rejected. Rather than reapplying after a period of time, as was customary, Pondai simply set himself up as a medium. Pondai also did not undergo the traditional rite of testing which involved a crocodile-infested section of the river, which is another reason that Kupara did not accept him as a genuine medium. The two mediums first clashed in 1957 when Kupara was forced to leave his home and settle elsewhere for a time. He chose to settle in a region that Pondai regarded as under his jurisdiction.

The next battle of the mediums came about in the late 1960s over the appointment of a new Chitsungo chieftain. It was accepted practice that the local *mhondoro* selected the successor to a dead chief. However, the colonial powers had disrupted the traditional chieftainship, by

9 LAN, Guns and Rain, 176-204.

giving the office to those who showed loyalty and dismissing those regarded as untrustworthy. The result was that the people tended to look to *mhondoro* mediums for leadership. In the appointment of the Chitsungo chief, the British district commissioner got involved. At first, Pondai prevailed and the appointment of his candidate was accepted by the government. But only a year or so later, the colonial administration was no longer so favourable toward him, and Kupara's candidate was now accepted (in spite of little support among the local people).

By this time the guerrilla movements that led to the war of independence were gaining momentum. The government were suspicious of mediums, knowing that they had played an important role in the rebellion of 1896-97. They pursued a policy similar to the one they had pursued with the native chiefs: they sought by cajolery and threat to bring the mediums into support of government policy. What they did not seem to realize was that each *mhondoro* was inherently anticolonial. Furthermore, it was a traditional requirement of a medium that he or she avoid all accoutrements of a western lifestyle, such as riding in a car or using western medicine. Unlike some mediums, Kupara did not compromise on the traditional lifestyle. Indeed, he seems to have done a good job of playing both sides against each other, since the government was convinced he was on their side, while the guerrillas apparently thought he supported them. Nevertheless, his authority was quoted by the government in their anti-rebel message, and they even broadcast tape-recorded interviews with him as a way of trying to gain support from the peasants. Pondai, however, was uncompromising in support of the ZANU movement and was sentenced to 25 years in prison as a result. When as a result of an amnesty Pondai was released from prison after seven years, he was the pre-eminent medium, his opponent Kupara having died five years earlier while suffering greater and greater government pressure on his lifestyle and expressions of loyalty.

4. The Support of a Scribal Figure

Baruch is a central figure in the book of Jeremiah. He is found in a number of passages, which include an entire prophecy devoted to himself (Jer 32; 36; 43; 45). He plays a definitely secondary role to Jeremiah from all appearances; however, appearances may be deceptive, as cross-cultural comparisons might suggest.

The spirit medium Alice Auma, discussed earlier, is a helpful example here because she had a sort of scribal figure to support her. The spirits would take possession of her and speak through her on a regular basis. During that time Alice would be unconscious and would later have no memory of what her mouth had uttered, but a 'chief clerk' would translate and record Alice's words. The power to translate was apparently granted by Alice's main spirit Lakwena directly to the chief clerk (there were three during the brief period of her ministry). He would also translate when she spoke in foreign languages. The person to be chief clerk was chosen by Lakwena, and he would not only report what the spirits said but would also ask questions of the spirits and would make reports to the spirits of what was happening externally. This description makes it obvious that the chief clerk had a position of great power, yet oddly no one within the movement seemed to realize this. He was seen simply as Alice's secretary.

This suggests that the historical Baruch – if anything like the description of him in the book of Jeremiah – would also have had a position of considerable influence, at least within those circles which recognized Jeremiah's authority. On one occasion, Baruch not only replaced a book of Jeremiah's prophecies that the king had burnt but 'also added many similar words to them' (Jer 36:32). The suggestion is that Baruch only recorded what Jeremiah dictated, but the process may have been much more dynamic than this suggests, with a greater personal contribution by Baruch himself. It is at least a possibility that needs to be considered.

5. Symbolic Actions

Jeremiah performs several symbolic actions. He is told to buy a linen loincloth which he then wears, but then he is required to make a journey to the Euphrates and bury the loincloth in a cleft in the rocks (Jer 13). Later, he returns to find it rotted, which stands for what Yhwh will do to Judah and Jerusalem. At a subsequent point in his career, Jeremiah is told to make a yoke and wear it, symbolizing the yoke that Nebuchnezzar would put on all the surrounding nations (Jer 27-28). Some months later the prophet Hananiah took it off Jeremiah's neck and broke it, prophesying that Yhwh would break the Babylonian yoke.

Symbolic actions are also documented for prophets in other cultures. One of the Mari texts describes a strange incident which involved

a prophetic symbolic act.[10] A *muhhûm* of Dagan called for food. He was given a lamb which he ate raw. He then assembled the elders of the city at the gate and gave a message in which the devouring of the lamb was evidently a sign of pestilence. In this light, Jeremiah's actions no longer look so strange.

Conclusions

This study looked at five aspects of prophecy in the book of Jeremiah and provided parallels and cross-cultural comparisons from anthropological studies of prophetic figures in contemporary or recent times. These can be summarized as follows:

1. Moral message of the prophets. The amount of text specifically on what we would call moral issues is actually quite small in most prophets; the focus is instead on cultic and theological issues (such as not worshiping other gods) – all very worthy but not what we tend to refer to as moral teachings. The prophetic messages in other cultures often include a variety of elements as well, but moral teachings (in the sense of conduct toward other humans) frequently take a central place in the message.

2. Criticism of the established government. It seems to be axiomatic to some biblical scholars that true prophets will criticize the powers that be but that other prophets will only kowtow to authority with the hope of personal gain. This is a caricature of both the biblical situation and that elsewhere, for a number of 'true' prophets cooperated with the contemporary ruler while many prophetic movements known from social anthropology have been associated with opposition to the government in power.

3. Prophetic conflict. Some social anthropologists have suggested that prophetic conflict is endemic to prophecy, and they seem to be right. Conflict is widespread among prophetic figures in contemporary societies, and it was prominent in ancient Israel. Naturally, the text presents it in terms of 'true' versus 'false' prophets or ignores the conflict altogether. At best, contemporary prophets found in the pages of the Bible seem to ignore each other (e.g., Haggai and Zechariah appear to operate in the same circles at the same time, yet neither mentions the other).

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10 A.3893 = J.-M. DURAND, *Archives épistolaires de Mari I/1*, Archives royales de Mari 26; Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1988, #206.

4. Support of a scribal figure. Jeremiah is one of the few prophets to have a visible supporter, though it is often suspected that the other prophets in the text would also have had disciples or other sorts of supporters. We have a well-documented parallel to Baruch in the 'chief clerks' of the Holy Spirit Mobile Army in 1980s Uganda. Although they may well have exercised their skills behind the scenes, they had great influence on development of the movement.

5. Symbolic actions. Jeremiah performs a number of such actions, including such varied performances as burying a loincloth in the rocks or wearing a yoke round his neck. They illustrate graphically what is going to happen in the future. Modern and historical prophetic movements may well make use of symbolic actions to get their message across.

So what have I proved with these examples? Not what some seem to think such parallels should prove: I have not proved that Jeremiah existed or that he carried out any of the actions ascribed to him in the book. Historicity in this sense is neither more likely nor less likely after my study. But some tentative conclusions do follow from the discussion, I believe:

- The study began with the assumption that the model of prophecy found in the Bible – or at least in Jeremiah – is based on the real experience of prophecy and is not an artificial literary creation. The examples and data given in this study support this assumption. The parallels provided here would be unlikely to exist if the model of prophecy in the Bible was simply the imagination of a literary mind.
- On the other hand, if these parallels are valid, the prophecy of the Bible has hardly been unique in history. The prophets that emerge from the biblical text look in many ways like prophets in other cultures. Prophecy in each culture has some unique elements, and this includes Israelite prophecy, but the presence of these (often culturally conditioned) singular characteristics do not negate the overall kinship with prophecy in other cultures.
- Most important, it provides a means of asking questions. The main purpose of cross-cultural comparison is to allow us to interrogate the sources. The examples and parallels given here might help us to look at the familiar text of Jeremiah in a different way. If it is able to do that, it is well worth the effort.

Some scholars may not be happy about domiciling Jeremiah with the social anthropologists, but I think that it enhances our knowledge. The old prophet still has some things to tell us about prophecy, but we have to ask new questions.

Of Branches, Pots and Figs: Jeremiah's Visions from a Cognitive Perspective

ELIZABETH R. HAYES

Language and Vision

Characteristically communication between the prophet and the divine in Jeremiah is described in terms of hearing or receiving the word of the Lord. Thus, the visually oriented reports of an almond branch (1:11-1:12), boiling pot (1:13-1:14) and two baskets of figs (24) are unique in the book of Jeremiah.[1] This paper uses a cognitive linguistics approach to analyse and describe the grammar, syntax and cognitive structuring of the reports. Since the categorization of visual perception as figure against ground is basic to human cognition this paper will concentrate upon the cognitive linguistics explanation of the figure-ground alignment as it affects grammar, syntax and cognitive construction.

Objects may favour figure or ground construal as follows:

Figure	Ground
location less known	location more known
smaller	larger
more mobile	less mobile
structurally simpler	structurally more complex
more salient	less salient[2]

A cognitive linguistics approach is particularly appropriate for analyzing prophetic literature because perspective in prophetic literature is highly dependent upon the perceptual field of the prophet. Jeremiah 1.4ff is a clear example of this. Jeremiah's early interaction with the divine is recorded as a series of reported communications. At the level of

1 NIDITCH refers to these examples as 'symbolic visions' and analyses them in conjunction with examples drawn from Amos, Zechariah and Daniel. She demonstrates that the visions are indicative of divinatory techniques used as a means for dream interpretation in the ANE. S. NIDITCH, The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition, Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1980.

2 W. CROFT and D. A. Cruse, Cognitive Linguistics, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 56.

the report the communication events are presented as figures against the ground of the prophet's perceptual field. Thus, the divinely initiated communication events are construed and constrained by human perception. Likewise, the subject matter of the individual communication events may be described in terms of the figure-ground alignment. With a degree of complexity this is the case for the almond branch, the boiling pot, and the two baskets of figs in the visions. These figures are not presented against a 'real world' ground. Rather, these figures are epistemically grounded against the perceptual field of the prophet – they also are construed and constrained by human perception.

The claim that prophetic literature is construed and constrained by human perception does not imply that understanding such literature is limited by human perceptual categories. As FAUCONNIER notes:

> … language is remarkable in allowing us to talk not just about what is, but also about what might have been, what will be, what is believed, hoped for, hypothesized, what is visually represented, make believe, fiction, what happened, what should have happened, and much more. Objectively, none of these are the same. We are referring to very different kinds of things: time periods, possible and impossible worlds, intentional states and propositional attitudes, epistemic and deontic modalities, pictures … and so on.[3]

Thus, language can record unusual examples of the figure-ground alignment, such as the aforementioned instances of communication events and inwardly perceived visions as figures against the ground of the prophet's perceptual field. Cognitive linguistics provides analytical framework for understanding such passages.

Vision and Language

Grammar, Syntax and Cognitive Construction in the Larger Units

Grammatical elements and syntactic features contribute important information for cognitive construction within the larger units containing the vision reports.[4] Grammatical elements involved include space

3 G. FAUCONNIER and E. SWEETSER, Spaces, Worlds, and Grammar, Chicago: UCP, 1996, 9.

4 Word order plays a large role in examining BH sentences from and information structure theory perspective. Significantly, information structure theory also utilizes the concept of figure-ground alignment to describe the structuring of clauses. In each case, the clause in question is considered the figure, while the ground in question is described as 'epistemic common ground' – in other words, the amount of background information that is known by participants in a speech event. In part, the

builders and deictic terms, while and syntactic elements, such as word order, contribute to information structure theory.

The diagram in Figure 1 below, presents a comparison of the three visions. Some definitions will be helpful for understanding the material presented in Figure 1:

Space builder: according to mental spaces theory, a network of mental spaces is built up as we think and talk. The spaces are opened, structured and linked via grammar, context and culture. Space builders, such as verbs of speaking, perception and cognition open new mental spaces.[5]

Metapragmatic phrasal expression: a phrase that initiates an instance of speech reporting a non-prototypical communication event.[6]

Ground: the part of a figure-ground configuration that is more locatable, larger, less salient, less mobile.[7]

Figure: the part of a figure-ground configuration that is less locatable, smaller, more salient and more mobile.

Thing: material anchor for complex projections.[8]

Extended great chain of being: folk model of how things function in the world forms the foundation for a metaphor system.[9]

Feature	Jeremiah 1:11-1:12	Jeremiah 1:13-1:14	Jeremiah 24:1-10
Space Builder Deictic term (presentational sentence establishes GROUND)			24:1 הֶרְאַנִי יְהוָה וְהִנֵּה שְׁנֵי דוּדָאֵי תְּאֵנִים מוּעָדוֹת לִפְנֵי הֵיכַל יְהוָה אַחֲרֵי הַגְלוֹת נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר

shared common ground determines the manner in which new information is added to discourse. Thus, sentences are categorized as having 'sentence focus' (all information is in focus), predicate focus (the subject is already part of the discourse, the predicate is in focus, predication a property of the subject) or argument focus (a particular argument is in focus for purposes of identification).

5 G. FAUCONNIER, Mental Spaces: Aspects of Meaning Construction in Natural Language, Cambridge: CUP, 1994; G. FAUCONNIER, Mappings in Thought and Language, Cambridge: CUP, 1997.

6 C. L. MILLER, The Representation of Speech in Biblical Hebrew Narrative: A Linguistic Analysis, Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2003.

7 CROFT and CRUSE, Cognitive Linguistics.

8 G. FAUCONNIER and M. TURNER, The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities, New York: Basic Books, 2002.

9 Z. KÖVECSES, Metaphor: A Practical Introduction, Oxford: OUP, 2002.

			מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל אֶת־יְכָנְיָהוּ בֶן־יְהוֹיָקִים מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה וְאֶת־שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה וְאֶת־הֶחָרָשׁ וְאֶת־הַמַּסְגֵּר מִירוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וַיְבִאֵם בָּבֶל׃
Explanation			24:2 הַדְּוִד אֶחָד תְּאֵנִים טֹבוֹת מְאֹד כִּתְאֵנֵי הַבִּכֹּרוֹת וְהַדְּוִד אֶחָד תְּאֵנִים רָעוֹת מְאֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תֵאָכַלְנָה מֵרֹעַ׃ ס
Space Builder MPE or speech frame	1:11a – MPE וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר	1:13a – MPE וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה | אֵלַי שֵׁנִית לֵאמֹר	24:3a speech frame וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי
Question	1:11b מָה־אַתָּה רֹאֶה יִרְמְיָהוּ	1:13b מָה אַתָּה רֹאֶה	24:3b מָה־אַתָּה רֹאֶה יִרְמְיָהוּ
Space Builder speech frame	1:11c וָאֹמַר	1:13c וָאֹמַר	24:3c וָאֹמַר
Response (argument focus sentence identifies **FIGURE)**	1:11d מַקֵּל שֹׁקֵד אֲנִי רֹאֶה׃	1:13d סִיר נָפוּחַ אֲנִי רֹאֶה וּפָנָיו מִפְּנֵי צָפוֹנָה׃	24:3d תְּאֵנִים הַ טֹבוֹת טֹבוֹת מְאֹד וְהָרָעוֹת רָעוֹת מְאֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תֵאָכַלְנָה מֵרֹעַ׃ פ
Space Builder – speech frame	1:12a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי	1:14a וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי	

Response	1:12b הֵיטַבְתָּ לִרְאוֹת כִּי־שֹׁקֵד אֲנִי עַל־דְּבָרִי לַעֲשֹׂתוֹ: פ	1:14b מִצָּפוֹן תִּפָּתַח הָרָעָה עַל כָּל־יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ:	
Space Builder – MPE			24:4 – MPE **וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:**
Space Builder – citation formula			**24:5a** **כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**
Elaboration		1:15-(1:19) כִּי	הִנְנִי קֹרֵא לְכֹל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת מַמְלְכוֹת צָפוֹנָה נְאֻם־יְהוָה וּבָאוּ וְנָתְנוּ אִישׁ כִּסְאוֹ פֶּתַח	שַׁעֲרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם וְעַל כָּל־חוֹמוֹתֶיהָ סָבִיב וְעַל כָּל־עָרֵי יְהוּדָה:	24:5b-24:7 כַּתְּאֵנִים הַ טֹּבוֹת הָאֵלֶּה כֵּן־אַכִּיר אֶת־גָּלוּת יְהוּדָה אֲשֶׁר שִׁלַּחְתִּי מִן־הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה אֶרֶץ כַּשְׂדִּים לְטוֹבָה:
			6 וְשַׂמְתִּי עֵינִי עֲלֵיהֶם לְטוֹבָה וַהֲשִׁבֹתִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וּבְנִיתִים וְלֹא אֶהֱרֹס וּנְטַעְתִּים וְלֹא אֶתּוֹשׁ:
			7 וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם לֵב לָדַעַת אוֹתִי כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה וְהָיוּ־לִי לְעָם וְאָנֹכִי אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים כִּי־יְשֻׁבוּ אֵלַי בְּכָל־לִבָּם: ס

Space Builder – citation formula	24:8-24:9
	8 וְכַתְּאֵנִים הָרָעוֹת אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תֵאָכַלְנָה מֵרָע כִּי־כֹה׀ אָמַר יְהוָה כֵּן אֶתֵּן אֶת־צִדְקִיָּהוּ מֶלֶךְ־יְהוּדָה וְאֶת־שָׂרָיו וְאֶת׀ שְׁאֵרִית יְרוּשָׁלַם הַנִּשְׁאָרִים בָּאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְהַיֹּשְׁבִים בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:
	9 וּנְתַתִּים לְזַוְעָה לְרָעָה לְכֹל מַמְלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ לְחֶרְפָּה וּלְמָשָׁל לִשְׁנִינָה וְלִקְלָלָה בְּכָל־הַמְּקֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר־אַדִּיחֵם שָׁם:
	10 וְשִׁלַּחְתִּי בָּם אֶת־הַחֶרֶב אֶת־הָרָעָב וְאֶת־הַדֶּבֶר עַד־תֻּמָּם מֵעַל הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר־נָתַתִּי לָהֶם וְלַאֲבוֹתֵיהֶם: פ

Figure 1. Grammar and Cognitive Construction in Jeremiah's Visions

Cognitive Construction

A glance at Figure 1 demonstrates that although the question-answer format occurs in each example, overall cognitive construction is not identical in each case.

Grammatical elements feature prominently in the two shorter examples. Both Jeremiah 1:11-1:12 and 1:13-1:14 begin with the space building phrase וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר. This space building phrase, a

prophetic citation formula, partitions information.[10] In each case, the MPE is followed by a question addressed to Jeremiah by YHWH. The response to each begins with the space-building term וָאֹמַר, and is followed by a reply from Jeremiah. Each reply contains a reference to the object of the vision – the almond branch and boiling pot.

Syntax creates significance for the question-answer pairs in 1:11, 1:13 and 24:3 in two ways. First, according to information structure theory, questions are always argument focus clauses. The 'what' in each question is in focus – it is the 'figure', highlighted against the ground – that is, the presupposition that both Jeremiah and YHWH perceive something. Additionally, because the arguments in each response are fronted, the answers to the questions are also argument focus clauses. The arguments (branch, pot and baskets of figs) are the focus elements of the clauses in question, even though these elements are the grammatical objects, not the grammatical subjects or the predicates of the sentences. As mentioned above, the objects of Jeremiah's perceptions are figures against the ground Jeremiah's perceptual field, which in turn is grounded in the presupposed speech situation involving JHWH and Jeremiah. Thus, the almond branch and boiling pot are highlighted as important information in these sentences.

The diagram in Figure 2 presents a **cognitive model** of speech and perception domains in Jeremiah 1, based upon mental spaces theory. This diagram places the two question-answer pairs within their larger textual context. Notably, the almond branch and boiling pot are located at the most deeply nested level in the mental space construction. The almond branch and boiling pot are presented as figures against the ground of Jeremiah's perceptual field, firmly anchoring the following elaboration (1:15-1:19) to the reported communication event.

10 The term partitions information at the lower levels of the text, however repetition of the phrase contributes to cohesion at higher levels. This may be rhetorically significant for the text as a whole.

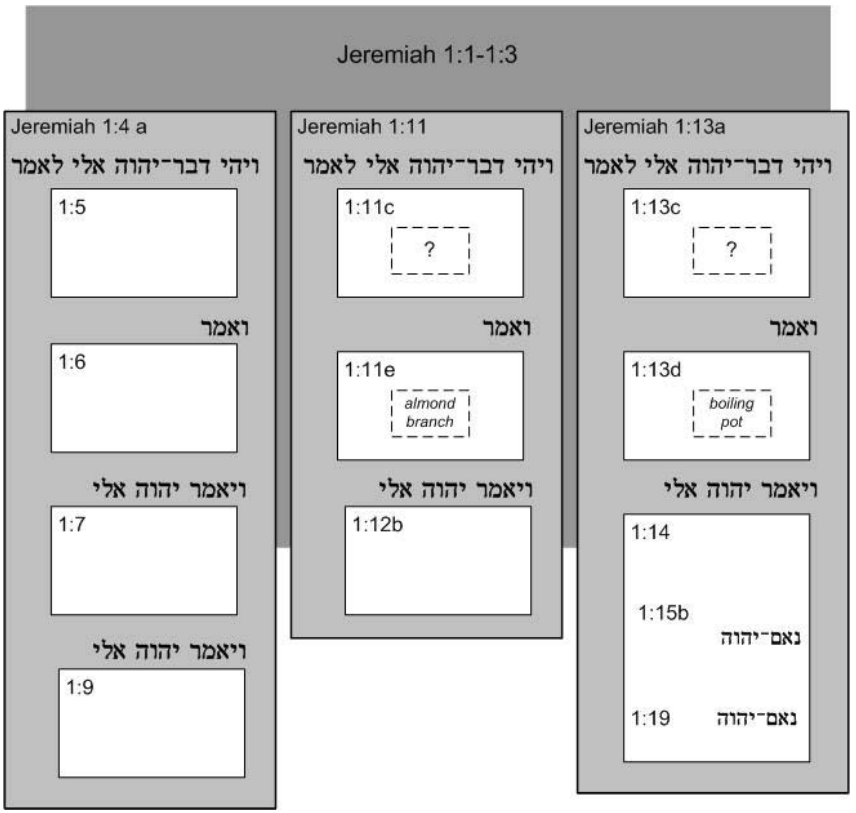

Figure 2. Cognitive Construction in Jeremiah 1:1-1:19

Cognitive construction in Jeremiah 24 differs at several key points. Notably, while the almond branch and the boiling pot are completely new to the discourse when the question 'what do you see' is asked, this is not the case for the two baskets of figs. Based upon grammar and syntax, Jeremiah 24:1 is a sentence focus, presentational sentence. The sentence begins with the space building phrase הֶרְאַנִי יְהוָה, which opens a perceptual space for Jeremiah. This is followed by the sentence deictic term וְהִנֵּה, which partitions information. This is followed by the phrase שְׁנֵי דוּדָאֵי מוּעָדִים לִפְנֵי הֵיכַל יְהוָה. This presentational sentence introduces important information regarding the vision report to follow. Both the figure (two baskets of figs) and ground (the temple of the Lord) are made explicit here. The deictic term אַחֲרֵי introduces spatio-temporal information regarding the initial vision, which occurred after King Nebuchadnezzar took King Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) and company to Babylon in 587 BCE. This is followed by a description of the contents of

each basket – one had first ripe figs, the other figs that were not fit to eat. The question and answer pair occur after this introduction.

Secondly, the space builder is not a MPE, which would open an entirely new speech frame. Rather, it is the phrase וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָי, the phrase used to introduce the God's responses in 1:12a and 1:14.a. Interestingly, A MPE occurs at 24:4. Here the phrase וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר opens a major new space, within which the phrase כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל at 24:5a and the phrase כִּי־כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה at 8.c open embedded spaces. The embedded spaces contain the contrastive explanations for the fate of the two groups: the good figs, the exiles and the bad figs, those who remained in Jerusalem.

The diagram in Figure 3 presents a **cognitive model** of speech and perception domains in Jeremiah 24, based upon mental spaces theory. This diagram places the question-answer pair of Jeremiah 24:3 within its larger context.

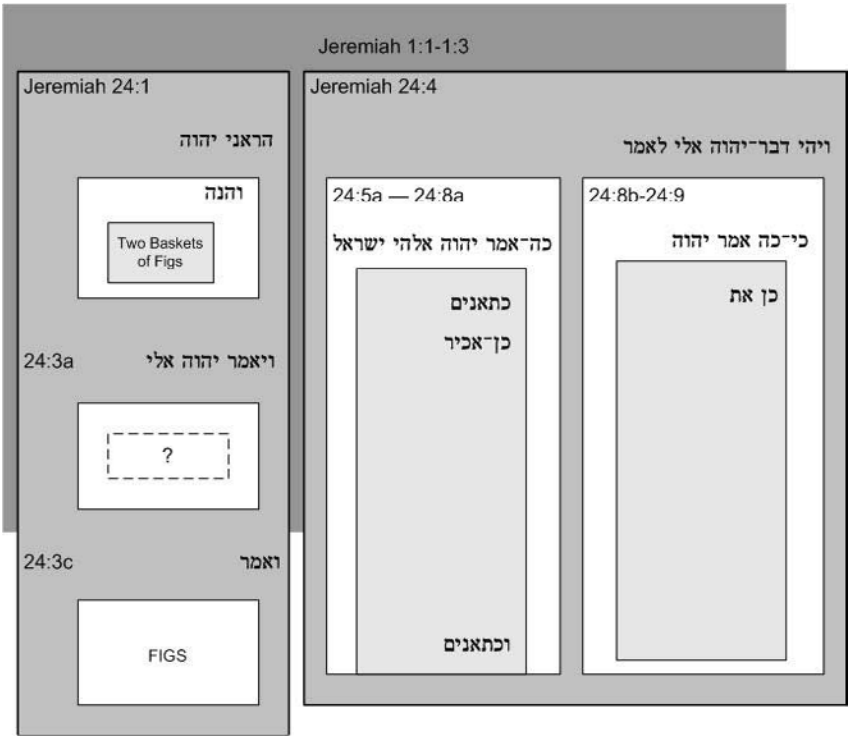

Figure 3. Cognitive Construction in Jeremiah 24

Three Visions in Jeremiah

The nature of Jeremiah's reported perceptions raises a primary question: Did Jeremiah see the almond branch, boiling pot and two baskets of figs as real entities in the real world (normal awareness), or did he perceive them as real things in an altered or dream-like world? Scholars are divided regarding the nature of the perceptual events.[11] The debate is not surprising, since Jeremiah's visions lack the extensive 'other-worldly' descriptions that characterize the visions in Isaiah and Ezekiel. On the contrary, these reports consist of brief mentions of ordinary objects followed by explanation and interpretation. However, because the visions are presented as reported perceptions, a more fruitful line of inquiry begins with the question: How do the reported perceptions relate to their explanations?

The starting point for this line of inquiry is an examination of the figure-ground alignment in each example. The chart in Figure 4 is based upon TALMY's categories for describing the figure-ground distinction.[12]

	1:11-12	1:13-14	24:1-10		1:11-12	1:13-14	24:1-10
FIGURE	Branch	Pot	Two Baskets of Figs	*GROUND*	Reported speech situation, mental space construction between speaker/hearer	Somewhere in Jerusalem	Before the temple After the 597 deportation
Location less known	?	?	yes	Location more known	?	?	yes
Smaller	?	?	yes	Larger	?	?	yes
More mobile	?	?	yes	Less mobile	?	likely	yes

11 W. MCKANE, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, 2 vols., International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, vol. 1, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986, 14-18.

12 CROFT and CRUSE, Cognitive Linguistics.

Structurally simpler	?	?	yes	Structurally more complex	?	likely	yes
More salient	yes	yes	yes	Less salient	yes	yes	yes
More recently in awareness	no	no	yes	Occurs Earlier in Scene	no	no	yes

Figure 4. Figure-Ground Alignment in Jeremiah's Visions

In each case, the figure is a 'thing' rather than a relation or an 'event'.[13] The almond branch is a singular item with no specified ground. For this reason, the default ground is Jeremiah's perceptual field which also anchors the communication event between Jeremiah and YHWH. The boiling pot is a slightly more complex figure. This image includes the singular pot, with additional information regarding its position. This image also relies upon image schemata, namely the containment schema and the force schema – containment, as the pot appears to contain boiling liquid and force because the liquid is heated.[14] Finally, the two baskets of figs do have an immediate ground, as they are described as being located in front of the temple of YHWH. However, it is important to keep in mind that this figure-ground arrangement is itself a figure presented against the default ground of Jeremiah's perceptual field, and is likewise anchored in a communication situation between Jeremiah and God.

How the Figure-Ground Configuration of Jeremiah's Visions Contributes to Cognitive Construction: 'Thing' as Material Anchor for Complex Projections

Examining the nature of the individual 'things' is important for determining how the reported perceptions relate to their explanations. This is doubly important. First, as FAUCONNIER explains, *things* act as material anchors for complex projections – watches help us to conceptualise

13 KÖVECSES, Metaphor: A Practical Introduction; R.W. LANGACKER, Foundations of Cognitive Grammar, Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Linguistics Club, 1983; R.W. LANGACKER, Foundations of Cognitive Grammar, vol. 1, Stanford: SUP, 1987.

14 For an explanation of image schemata, see M. JOHNSON, The Body in the Mind: The Bodily Basis of Meaning, Imagination, and Reason, Chicago: UCP, 1987.

the passage of time, cathedrals help us to concepualise the connection between the earth and the divine and so on.[15] Likewise, in the Jeremiah text, Jeremiah's *perceived* things act as *perceived* material anchors for complex projections. It is not impossible that both real things and reported perceived things can act as 'material' anchors for the complex projections involved in interpreting and understanding their significance. This is why the 'reality' factor may not be as important as the nature of the reported perceived 'thing' for establishing how the things relate to their explanations.

Secondly, because the figures are 'things' rather than 'events', the almond branch, boiling pot and two baskets of figs are made available for conceptual metaphors based upon the Extended Great Chain of Being metaphor system. Conceptual metaphors provide a framework for understanding the complex projections invoked by the various figures in the visions. Thus, both of these features affect the way that the almond branch, boiling pot and two baskets of figs are related to their interpretations.

Material Anchor: Characteristics of the Things in the Visions

The almond branch is the least complex of the three things in the visions. The figure of the almond branch does not have specific image schematic structure and does not function as a feature in conceptual metaphor. It is presented as a figure against the ground of the prophet's perceptual field. However, the almond branch is memorable due the play on words between shakad/shoked.[16]

The boiling pot is more complex that the almond branch. This image evokes the containment and path image schemata. Additionally, the image schemata are open to mental manipulation. Specifically, the boiling liquid may be viewed as a mass as it is in the process of tipping. Yet the explanation of evil from the north takes shape as military attack – the liquid mass sorts itself into a multiplex group of kings and their retinues. Elsewhere I have argued that this contributes to the conceptual metaphor – ANGER IS A BOILING LIQUID IN AN ENCLOSED CONTAINER. Again, the figure of the metaphor is presented against the ground of the prophet's perceptual field.

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15 FAUCONNIER and TURNER, The Way We Think.

16 NIDITCH notes that the reuse of a symbol term denoting an everyday object is reminiscent of a divinatory technique used for dream interpretation in the ANE. NIDITCH, The Symbolic Vision in Biblical Tradition, 9.

The two baskets of figs placed in front of the temple is the most complex figure. For the first time, more than one thing is mentioned. The two baskets of figs invoke the containment schema, although this schema does not undergo mental manipulation. The agricultural reference to figs points toward the SOCIETY IS A PLANT conceptual metaphor: individuals are fruit, implying that the people represented are the culmination of the growing process. The baskets are presented against the immediate ground of the temple, which provides the single locative cue for the figure. Once again, this figure is presented against the ground of the prophet's perceptual field.

Complex Projections: Conceptual Metaphor

Conceptual metaphor contributes to understanding how the 'things' relate to their explanations in two of Jeremiah's visions. In Jer 1:13-1:14, the boiling pot instantiates the conceptual metaphor – ANGER IS A BOILING LIQUID IN AN ENCLOSED CONTAINER. This vision occurs immediately after Jeremiah's commissioning as a prophet to the nations in 1:10 his message has implications that extend to Judah and beyond. Nations and kingdoms will be uprooted and torn down, destroyed and demolished – then rebuilt and replanted. Clearly, the vision in 1:13-1:14 plays upon these ideas.

Additionally, the language used here – *uproot and replant, tear down and rebuild,* introduces two abstract complex systems conceptual metaphors into the text: SOCIETY IS A PLANT and SOCIETY IS A BUILDING.[17] These conceptual metaphors open the way for understanding aspects of the target domain (nations, kingdoms, society) based upon the characteristics of the given source domain (buildings, plants). Nations and kingdoms might be as firmly located and stable as a well built edifice – or might be crumbling and deteriorating from within and subject to attack from without. Society might be flourishing, a healthy tree by water – or it might be dry, decaying, producing inferior fruit or unable to produce fruit at all. This way of looking at society is particularly important for the vision in chapter 24. Each of the figures is used to understand a different aspect of the relationship between the human and the divine. The almond branch is related to YHWH's intent to bring his word to fulfillment. The boiling pot is a vivid description of impending judgement upon the people. The baskets of figs are associated with two groups of Judaeans: those who have experienced the exile and those

17 KÖVECSES, Metaphor: A Practical Introduction, 127-134.

who remained in the land. In each case, the figures are grounded against the perceptual field of the prophet, who functions as an intermediary between YHWH and the people. Each of these examples demonstrates the ubiquity of the figure-ground aspect of visual perception, which is basic to human cognition.

The Historical Dilemma of Biblical Prophetic Studies

MARTTI NISSINEN

Prophetic Studies in Transition

It has been noted since late 1980's at the latest that the study of biblical prophecy and prophetic books is going through a paradigm switch.[1] Indeed, prophetic studies have for quite a while found themselves in a period of transition; they are not the same as they used to be a couple of decades ago. A quick look at the spectrum of today's variety of methodological approaches in biblical studies is enough to demonstrate that traditional historical-critical studies have given way to less historical and non-historical ways of viewing the prophetic books, such as literary and gender approaches or postcolonial studies and ideological criticism. However, as many contributions published in the present volume (including an article by HANS BARSTAD to which this article originally responded)[2] and other recent collections of essays[3] well demonstrate,

1 Cf. F. E. DEIST, The Prophets: Are We Heading for a Paradigm Switch?, in: V. FRITZ, K.-F. POHLMANN, H.-C. SCHMITT (eds.), Prophet und Prophetenbuch: Festschrift für Otto Kaiser zum 65. Geburtstag, BZAW 185, Berlin 1989, 1-18; O. LORETZ, Die Entstehung des Amosbuches im Licht der Prophetien aus Mari, Assur, Ishchali und der Ugarit-Texte: Paradigmenwechsel in der Prophetenforschung, UF 24, 1992, 179-215.

2 The first draft of this article was presented as a response to HANS BARSTAD's opening lecture of the Society of Biblical Literature International Meeting in Edinburgh, July 2, 2006; cf. his article in this volume, p. 10-32.

3 E.g., E. BEN ZVI, M.H. FLOYD (eds.),Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy, SBLSymS 10, Atlanta 2000; M. NISSINEN (ed.), Prophecy in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context, SBLSymS 13, Atlanta 2000; L.L. GRABBE, R.D. HAAK (eds.), 'Every City Shall Be Forsaken': Urbanism and Prophecy in Ancient Israel and the Near East, JSOT.S 330, Sheffield 2001; M. KÖCKERT, M. NISSINEN (eds.), Propheten in Mari, Assyrien und Israel, FRLANT 201, Göttingen 2003; I. FISCHER, K. SCHMID, H.G.M. WILLIAMSON (eds.), Prophetie in Israel: Beiträge des Symposiums 'Das Alte Testament und die Kultur der Moderne' anlässlich des 100. Geburtstags Gerhard von Rads (1901-1971) Heidelberg, 18.-21. Oktober 2001, Altes Testament und Moderne 11, Münster 2003; L.L. GRABBE, A.O. BELLIS (eds.), The Priests in the Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets, and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets, JSOT.S 408, New York and London 2003; E. BEN ZVI (ed.), Utopia and Dystopia in Prophetic Literature, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society

even historical-critical studies have by no means lost their relevance in studies of prophecy; nevertheless, it is observable that their focus has turned away from the reconstruction of the life and deeds of historical prophets and directed towards literary processes that resulted in the biblical prophetic books and socioreligious issues related to prophecy and society. The diachronic studies in the prophetic books no longer aim at 'the pristine and uncontaminated verse of the author, poet and prophet'[4]; they would rather give to each layer and gloss its own meaning and significance. Even synchronic studies that refrain from reconstructing the literary genesis of the prophetic books are often historically oriented, reading the books against the background of the Second Temple period, that is, the date of the prophetic books in their advanced (but not necessarily 'final') literary form.[5]

In addition, historical studies are no longer restricted to the biblical text itself, thanks to the increasing attention to the documentation of ancient Near Eastern prophecy, which enables the appreciation of the Hebrew prophecy as another specimen of a wider cultural and socioreligious phenomenon of transmitting allegedly divine words to human recipients. No serious study of prophecy as a historical phenomenon can do without extrabiblical sources, which today are available to every researcher.[6]

Recent methodological innovations as well as the extended corpus of source material have caused fundamental reorientations in the study of prophecy. There was a time when the study of the prophetic books was essentially focused on the reconstruction of the message of each biblical prophet as a historical personality and the original author of the prophetic book ascribed to him, whose work had subsequently been

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92, Helsinki 2006; M.H. FLOYD, R.D. HAAK, (eds.), Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism, LHBOTS 427, New York and London 2006; B.E. KELLE, M.B. MOORE (eds.), Israel's Prophets and Israel's Past: Essays on the Relationship of Prophetic Texts and Israelite History in Honor of John H. Hayes, LHBOTS 446, New York and London 2006.

4 Thus F.I. ANDERSEN and D.N. FREEDMAN, Hosea: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, AB 24, Garden City, N.Y., 1980, 60.

5 Cf., e.g., the following works on the book of Hosea, both of which read the book in a postmonarchical setting: E. BEN ZVI, Hosea, FOTL XXIA/1, Grand Rapids, Mich. 2005; J.M. TROTTER, Reading Hosea in Achaemenid Yehud, JSOT.S 328, Sheffield 2001.

6 The ancient Near Eastern prophetic sources are now available in: M. NISSINEN, with contributions by C.L. SEOW and R.K. RITNER, Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East, SBLWAW 12, Atlanta 2003. The two main corpora of ancient Near Eastern documents of prophecy, those deriving from Mari (18th cent. BCE) and Nineveh (7th cent. BCE), are published in J.-M. DURAND, Archives épistolaires de Mari I/1, ARM 26, Paris 1988 and S. PARPOLA, Assyrian Prophecies, SAA 9, Helsinki 1997.

supplemented by later hands. Classical studies of this kind—such as BERNHARD DUHM's on Israel's prophets[7]—are the absolute prerequisite of the critical study of biblical prophecy, and the prophetic books are still quite commonly approached through the prophets to whom the texts are traditionally ascribed. However, a brief look at recent introductions to the Hebrew Bible or to the prophetic literature reveals that the prophetic books are introduced primarily as books, whereas the prophets to whom they are attributed tend to become indistinct.[8] This reflects the scholarly conviction that the primary mission of prophetic studies can no longer be to establish the *ipsissima verba* of ancient prophets, since they can hardly be distracted from any written sources, whether biblical or nonbiblical[9]—it is not even to identify the earliest material included in the prophetic texts, as if it were more interesting and valuable by virtue of its alleged 'originality'. The 'author-in time' model is increasingly being replaced by other models, more or less interested in historical issues—whatever is meant with 'history.'[10]

What is the aim of prophetic studies, then? There is certainly more than one answer to this question. Since the reliance on objective and value-free questions is gone, the answer depends on each researcher's agenda; the concerns of a theologian, postcolonialist, feminist, or, say, discourse analyst will result in sets of questions that may be equally relevant but different from those implied by the title of this paper which focuses on the historical dilemma of prophetic studies. Biblical studies have many aims, one of them still being a historical one.

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7 B. DUHM, Israels Propheten, Tübingen 1916, [2]1922.

8 Cf. the treatments of the prophetic books in: E. ZENGER et al., Einleitung in das Alte Testament, Studienbücher Theologie, Stuttgart [4]2001, 371-533; T. RÖMER, J.-D. MACCHI, C. NIHAN, (eds.), Introduction à l'Ancien Testament, Le Monde de la Bible 49, Geneva 2004, 231-475. See also U. BECKER, Die Wiederentdeckung des Prophetenbuches: Tendenzen und Aufgaben der gegenwärtigen Prophetenforschung, BTZ 21, 2004, 30-60.

9 On the impossibility of reaching the *ipsissima verba* in ancient Near Eastern prophecy, see K. VAN DER TOORN, From the Oral to the Written: The Case of Old Babylonian Prophecy, in BEN ZVI and FLOYD (eds.), Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy (see n. 3), 219-234, and M. NISSINEN, 'Spoken, Written, Quoted and Invented: Orality and Writtenness in Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy,' ibid., 235-271.

10 For a critical review of the 'author-in time' model and viewing the prophets as religious individuals *sui generis*, see C.R. SEITZ, Prophecy and Hermeneutics: Toward a New Introduction to the Prophets, Studies in Theological Interpretation, Grand Rapids, Mich. 2007, 75-92.

Prophecy: A Social Phenomenon or a Literary One?

As an example of a sophisticated discussion reflecting the change of paradigm in prophetic studies, I would like to refer to the debate on the applicability of the category of prophecy to the prophetic figures like Jeremiah. This debate was initiated in 1983 by GRAEME AULD.[11] In his article published in the *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, AULD analyzed the usage of the word נביא and other nouns indicating prophetic roles in the Hebrew Bible, proposing that not only נביא but the biblical concept of prophecy in general is a creation of a literary tradition, not historically applicable to a person like Jeremiah. In the following number of *JSOT*, AULD received a positive response from ROBERT CARROLL, according to whom the biblical figures called 'prophets' were rather poets and intellectuals who were subsequently transformed into prophetic mediators of the divine word;[12] and a more critical one from HUGH WILLIAMSON based on examination of AULD'S principal arguments.[13]

The discussion was reinitiated in the same journal in 1990 by THOMAS OVERHOLT who turned the focus on the social reality of prophecy as another type of religious intermediation, which is a widely distributed and well documented cross-cultural phenomenon.[14] Biblical prophecy, according to him, conforms to this pattern, hence there were prophets in Israel and Judah, and the biblical figures thus designated were recognized as prophets by their contemporaries. OVERHOLT received a short response from AULD[15] and a more substantial one from CARROLL[16] who did not deny that the biblical representation of the prophets conforms to the social reality model but questioned its bearing on the definition of the historicity of biblical characters and the

11 A.G. AULD, Prophets through the Looking Glass: Between Writings and Moses, JSOT 27, 1983, 3-23.

12 R.P. CARROLL, Poets not Prophets: A Response to 'Prophets through the Looking Glass,' JSOT 27, 1983, 25-31.

13 H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, A Response to A. Graeme Auld, JSOT 27, 1983, 33-39. The round of discussion was closed by A.G. AULD, Prophets through the Looking Glass: A Response to Robert Carroll and Hugh Williamson, JSOT 27, 1983, 41-44.

14 T.W. OVERHOLT, Prophecy in History: The Social Reality of Intermediation, JSOT 48, 1990, 3-29; cf. his books, Prophecy in Cross-Cultural Perspective: A Source-Book for Biblical Research, SBLSBS, Atlanta 1986, and Channels of Prophecy: The Social Dynamics of Prophetic Activity, Minneapolis, Minn. 1989.

15 A. G. AULD, Prophecy in Books: A Rejoinder, JSOT 48, 1990, 31-32.

16 ROBERT P. CARROLL, 'Whose Prophet? Whose History? Whose Social Reality? Troubling the Interpretive Community Again: Notes towards a Response to T.W. Overholt's Critique', JSOT 48, 1990, 33-49.

differentiation between the character and the character's author. The debate was closed by OVERHOLT'S short rejoinder with the title 'It Is Difficult to Read',[17] but the issue was taken up once more in *JSOT* by HANS BARSTAD[18] who shared the scepticism of AULD and CARROLL with regard to the historicity of biblical prophetic figures but, like OVERHOLT, defined prophecy as transmission of the divine word[19] and paid attention to the reality of prophetic practice by referring to the corpus of ancient Near Eastern prophetic texts as relevant parallels to biblical prophecy. When compared critically with the Hebrew Bible, these parallels corroborate the view that the biblical prophetic books indeed represent edited collections of originally prophetic sayings.

The above described discussion was found significant enough to be included as a whole in an anthology entitled *The Prophets* (1996),[20] edited by PHILIP R. DAVIES who[21], in the introduction to that volume, summarizes the problem as follows: 'Is *biblical* prophecy, then, a social phenomenon or a literary one? If both, what is the connection between ancient Israelite/Judaean intermediaries and the biblical prophetic literature?'[22] After a dozen years, I find these questions still valid and engaging. In many recent studies, biblical prophecy appears first and foremost as literature created by the Second Temple literate circles,[23] while in others, prophecy is examined as a socioreligious phenomenon,

17 T.W. OVERHOLT, 'It Is Difficult to Read', JSOT 48, 1990, 51-54.

18 H.M. BARSTAD, No Prophets? Recent Developments in Biblical Prophetic Research and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy, JSOT 57, 1993, 39-60.

19 This definition builds upon the one formulated by MANFRED WEIPPERT in his: Aspekte israelitischer Prophetie im Lichte verwandter Erscheinungen des Alten Orients, in: Ad bene et fideliter seminandum: Festgabe für Karlheinz Deller, AOAT 220, Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn 1988, 287-319, esp. 289-290; cf. idem, Prophetie im Alten Orient, NBL 3, 1997, 196-200, esp. 197.

20 P.R. DAVIES, (ed.), The Prophets, The Biblical Seminar 42, Sheffield 1996, 22-126.

21 To be sure, the author of the introduction is not indicated, but I presume it is written by the editor of the volume.

22 DAVIES (ed.), The Prophets (see n. 20), 14 (emphasis original).

23 E.g., E. BEN ZVI, Introduction: Writings, Speeches, and the Prophetic Books—Setting an Agenda, in: BEN ZVI and FLOYD (eds.), Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy (see n. 3), 1-29; idem, Hosea (see n. 5), 12-20; M.H. FLOYD, Basic Trends in the Form-Critical Study of Prophetic Texts, in: M.A. SWEENEY, E. BEN ZVI, The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century, Grand Rapids, Mich. 2003, 298-311; idem, The Production of Prophetic Books in the Early Second Temple Period, in: FLOYD and HAAK (eds.), Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism (see n. 3), 276-297; P.R. DAVIES, Amos, Man and Book, in: KELLE and MOORE (eds.), Israel's Prophets and Israel's Past (see n. 3), 113-131; K. VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible, Cambridge, Mass. 2007, 173-204.

often utilizing extrabiblical documents.[24] These two aspects need not be seen as each other's alternatives, and efforts have been made to extend the definition of prophecy to include even the literary enterprises of those who interpret received prophetic texts for their own contemporaries, thus highlighting the social reality of prophecy as a *literary* phenomenon.[25] But the question remains concerning the relationship between the Israelite/Judaean intermediaries and the biblical prophetic literature—or ancient Hebrew prophecy and biblical prophecy, as I would like to rephrase this dichotomy.[26] The paradigm switch, if I interpret it correctly, seems to be leading to a sharpened awareness of both aspects, the literary character of biblical prophecy, and prophecy as a crosscultural phenomenon.

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24 In addition to the works mentioned in n. 9, cf., e.g., L.L. GRABBE, Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel, Valley Forge, Pa. 1995, 66-118; H.B. HUFFMON, A Company of Prophets: Mari, Assyria, Israel, in: NISSINEN (ed.), Prophecy in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context (see n. 3), 47-70; K. VAN DER TOORN, Mesopotamian Prophecy between Immanence and Transcendence: A Comparison of Old Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian Prophecy, ibid., 71-87; M. NISSINEN, The Socioreligious Role of the Neo-Assyrian Prophets, ibid., 89-114; H.B. HUFFMON, The One and the Many: Prophets and Deities in the Ancient Near East, in: KÖCKERT and NISSINEN (eds.), Propheten in Mari, Assyrien und Israel (see n. 3), 116-131; idem, The Oracular Process: Delphi and the Near East, VT 57, 2007, 449-460; A.C. HAGEDORN, Looking at Foreigners in Biblical and Greek Prophecy, ibid., 432-448; A. LANGE, Greek Seers and Israelite-Jewish Prophets, ibid., 461-482; H.M. BARSTAD, Mari and the Hebrew Bible: Some Parallels, SEÅ 70, 2005, 21-32; idem, Sic dicit dominus: Mari Prophetic Texts and the Hebrew Bible, in Y. AMIT, E. BEN ZVI, I. FINKELSTEIN, O. LIPSCHITS, Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context: A Tribute to Nadav Na'aman, Winona Lake, Ind. 2006, 21-52.

25 See, e.g., L.L. GRABBE, Poets, Scribes, or Preachers? The Reality of Prophecy in the Second Temple Period, in: L.L. GRABBE, R.D. HAAK, Knowing the End from the Beginning: The Prophetic, the Apocalyptic and Their Relationships, JSP.S 46, London and New York 2003, 192-215; M. NISSINEN, How Prophecy Became Literature, SJOT 19, 2005, 153-172; A. LANGE, Literary Prophecy and Oracle Collection: A Comparison between Judah and Greece in Persian Times, in: FLOYD and HAAK (eds.), Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism (see n. 3), 248-275.

26 See M. NISSINEN, What Is Prophecy? An Ancient Near Eastern Perspective, in: J. KALTNER, L. STULMAN (eds.), Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East; Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon, JSOT.S 378, London and New York 2004, 17-37, esp. 28-31.

Who Is Talking Now?

So what can we know about the prophets as historical figures? HANS BARSTAD, in his article published in this volume,[27] attempts to find the way out of the *ipsissima verba* dilemma by going beyond the fact-or-fiction distinction and taking a narrative approach. He takes it for granted that the stories about prophets in the Hebrew Bible do not translate as accurate records of historical factualities (after more than two centuries of critical study, this still needs to be said aloud!). Instead, he reads them as literary universes that in all likelihood present their narrative world in a way that was imaginable to their audiences; in other words, the textual world had to be designed in a way that corresponded to the real and symbolic worlds of the implied readers. In his words: 'A fictitious story is a historically untrue story that could have happened but that did not happen.'[28] Every text informs something about its time, and there is an element of fact in every fiction. I welcome this approach which, like every other approach, also raises questions.

No historical study can be done without some confidence in the sources as documents of historical factualities. The problem is that the source material is always fragmentary, sometimes helplessly so, and comes to us through several filters that contribute to the picture available to us. Apart from the two substantial corpora of texts from Mari and Assyria, the ancient Near Eastern documentation of prophecy is extremely scattered, and it is more than probable that important aspects of Near Eastern prophecy remain entirely hidden from the eyes of the modern researcher. When it comes to the biblical text, there can be no doubt of the literary and composite character of the biblical prophetic books; the available text critical evidence, even though it is late, testifies to a complicated literary history of these texts that was still

27 See above, p. 10-32. Cf. also his reflections on genre in: H.M. BARSTAD, 'Fact' versus 'Fiction' and Other Issues in the History Debate, and Their Relevance for the Study of the Old Testament, in: C. BULTMANN, W. DIETRICH, C. LEVIN (eds.), Vergegenwärtigung des Alten Testaments: Beiträge zur biblischen Hermeneutik; Festschrift für Rudolf Smend zum 70. Geburtstag, Göttingen 2002, 433-447; idem, Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah and the Historical Prophet, in: A.G. HUNTER, P.R. DAVIES, Sense and Sensitivity: Essays on Reading the Bible in Memory of Robert Carroll, JSOT.S 348, Sheffield 2002, 87-100; and idem, Jeremiah as Text: Some Reflections on Genre and Reality in Old Testament Prophetic Research, in: M. MÜLLER, T.L. THOMPSON, Historie og konstruktion: Festskrift til Niels Peter Lemche i anledning af 60 års fødselsdagen den 6. September 2005, Forum for Bibelsk Eksegese 14, Copenhagen 2005, 11-18.

28 Above, p. 22.

going on at the time when the Dead Sea Scrolls were written and the Septuagint was translated.[29] This means that the prophetic and other books of the Hebrew Bible, in all their voluminous appearance, provide us with only a fragmentary documentation of prophecy in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah and in the Persian province of Yehud. Still, both biblical and Near Eastern sources are indispensable evidence for a historian, since they are the only sources informing about prophecy in their time.

The dilemma is this: Who is talking now? If we agree that, for instance, the book of Jeremiah tells us 'a lot about what prophecy was like in ancient Israel',[30] we have to ask again the questions like those posed by CARROLL in his debate with OVERHOLT. After the methodological turmoil and the growing attention to the Near Eastern prophetic sources during the past two decades, these questions are still up-to-date—in fact, burning as never before. Two of them, in particular, should be contemplated before saying anything further, because they have a bearing on all that follows from them:

- Which Israel? Does 'ancient Israel' refer to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah that existed before the 6th century BCE or to the Second Temple community?
- Whose prophet? Same problem as before, mutatum mutandum; but there are even more alternatives, since we have to make a difference between biblical and modern concepts of prophecy, which are more than one on both sides. 'If a nabî was a *ro'eh*, what then was a *ro'eh*?'[31] A question simple as this presents the problem in a nutshell, since the answer requires fundamental distinctions to be made with regard to the biblical, religio-historical, as well as the modern presentations of prophecy.

As a corollary of these two root questions, at least the following three immediately suggest themselves:

- Whose history are we dealing with? That of a certain prophet, for instance, Jeremiah, his hangers-on, or certain factions of the Second Temple communities of different times?
- What are the socioreligious prerequisites of the texts under scrutiny? For example, which temple of Jerusalem is it that individual texts in the book of Jeremiah actually speak about—the First, the Second, or an

29 See, e.g., E. ULRICH, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of the Bible, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1999; for a case study, see A. AEJMELAEUS, Lost in Reconstruction? On Hebrew and Greek Reconstructions in 2 Sam 24, BIOSCS 40, 2007, 89-106.

30 BARSTAD, above, p. 22.

31 CARROLL, Whose Prophet? Whose History? Whose Social Reality? (see n. 16), 90.

imaginary one? Where are the false prophets to be looked for and why are they false?

- What should we do with the gaps and empty spaces that inevitably remain in our historical reconstruction? Whose voices do we not hear or fail to take notice of?

The answers to these questions do make a difference if we want to relate the texts with a social reality of any kind. I do agree with HANS BARSTAD that even fictitious texts may contain historically true information on ancient societies;[32] in his footsteps, I have myself used Jer 36 as an example of a fiction that is not entirely void of historical information.[33] However, it is far from self-evident which societies we are dealing with when we start examining the book of Jeremiah. Take the three illlustrious commentaries of Jeremiah published some twenty years ago, those of ROBERT P. CARROLL, WILLIAM MCKANE and WILLIAM HOLLADAY, and you will find three different approaches and respective answers to this question: one reading the text as the product of the Second Temple community without even trying to reconstruct the historical prophet,[34] another introducing the idea of a 'rolling corpus' that includes words of the prophet that have triggered a long chain of literary interpretations included in the same text,[35] and yet another attempting at a maximalist reading of the book as a document from the time of the prophet himself.[36] So the question, 'Who is talking now?,' not only applies to the texts but also to their interpreters. Indeed, it is difficult to read.

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32 In addition to the essay published in this volume, cf. BARSTAD, 'Jeremiah as Text' (see n. 27); idem, ''Fact' versus 'Fiction' and Other Issues in the History Debate' (see n. 27), 443-445.

33 NISSINEN, How Prophecy Became Literature (see n. 25), 163-164; cf. H.-J. STIPP, Baruchs Erben: Die Schriftprophetie im Spiegel von Jer 36, in: H. IRSIGLER (ed.), 'Wer darf hinaufsteigen zum Berg JHWHs?': Beiträge zu Prophetie und Poesie des Alten Testaments; Festschrift für Sigurður Örn Steingrímsson zum 70. Geburtstag, Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament 72, St. Ottilien 2002, 145-170; VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible (see n. 23), 184-188.

34 R.P. CARROLL, Jeremiah: A Commentary, OTL, London 1986.

35 W. MCKANE, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, Vol. 1: Introduction and Commentary on Jeremiah 1-25, ICC, Edinburgh 1986; idem, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, Vol. 2: Commentary on Jeremiah 26-52, ICC, Edinburgh 1996.

36 W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1-25, Hermeneia, Philadelphia 1986; idem, Jeremiah 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 26-52, Hermeneia, Minneapolis 1989.

What Prophecy?

Like every historical reconstruction, even that of ancient prophecy begins with the identification of sources. It is the task of the scholarly community to decide where the evidence can be found and what kind of evidence can be judged as prophetic. This is everything else but a matter of course. There is no unanimity about what prophecy is—not even in the biblical text, not to mention the sources where the whole concept is not inherent; hence we already at the outset have to confront different scholarly positions, sometimes associated with value judgments concerning biblical prophets and extrabiblical soothsayers, or more and less valuable prophecy within the Hebrew Bible. Amos is not by necessity the paragon of true prophecy, but he has been given this elevated position by Western scholarship that has found 'his' moral vision superior to anything represented by his co-Israelites, not to mention the notorious Canaanites. Today still, Amos tends to be used as a test case of a prophet *par excellence* in scholarly literature,[37] even though he could as well be considered an anomaly when compared with his Near Eastern or even domestic colleagues (with whom he does not want to be identified anyway, Am 7:7-10!).

The issue between AULD, CARROLL, OVERHOLT and others was essentially how much prophecy can actually be found in the Hebrew Bible. This, of course, depends entirely on what the scholarly community wants the word 'prophecy' to mean. Prophecy is, ultimately, a scholarly category deeply rooted in Jewish-Christian theology and biblical studies, and its application to nonbiblical sources is no matter of course either.

There is no reason to give up the whole concept of prophecy, if we can come to terms about what kind of activity it is used for, and make the definition flexible enough to allow a degree of variability depending on time and culture. Prophecy remains a useful category especially now that we are able to work cross-culturally to a greater extent than before. Indeed, the recent definitions of prophecy take prophecy as a religio-historical phenomenon documented by various source materials, ancient and modern, the Hebrew Bible being but one of them without any precedence over the others. This is without doubt the result of the growing knowledge of ancient Near Eastern prophetic documents, and it is no coincidence that today's most-quoted definition of prophecy is formulated by MANFRED WEIPPERT, one of the few pioneers of

37 The elevated position of Amos can be traced back (at least) to Julius Wellhausen and the 19th century ideal of 'ethical monotheism'; see LORETZ, Die Entstehung des Amosbuches (see n. 1), 198-203.

their study.[38] Having its roots in earlier scholarship, the cross-cultural reading of prophecy has established itself during the 1980's hand in hand with the acknowledgement of intermediation being the primary quality of prophecy. WEIPPERT was not the first and only one of the scholars of the 1980's who based his cross-cultural reading of prophecy on the understanding of prophecy as transmission. The names HERBERT B. HUFFMON,[39] ROBERT R. WILSON,[40] THOMAS W. OVERHOLT[41] and DAVID L. PETERSEN[42] from the other side of the Atlantic deserve to be mentioned, too, as representatives of the understanding of prophecy as transmission, while approaching the issue from different perspectives. Sharing the same notion, I fully agree with OVERHOLT that prophecy is a kind of religious intermediation that is cross-culturally distributed and conforms to a describable pattern of communication and social behavior.[43]

The significance of the ancient Near Eastern comparative material to solving the historical dilemma of prophetic studies is beyond any reasonable doubt. It helps to see things that on the basis of the biblical text alone would appear in a distorted light. For instance, it has contributed decisively to dismantling the strict division between prophecy and divination and helped to appreciate prophecy as another, non-inductive, or non-technical, method of the alleged communication with the divine and receiving divine knowledge.[44] The comparative material, ancient and modern, provides the biblical and cross-cultural studies with a model of the prophetic practice, language, roles, and social setting, enabling a view of the biblical text from a distance, as a part of a bigger picture. The danger with the distance is that we may not see the

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38 In addition to the works mentioned in n. 19, see especially M. WEIPPERT, Assyrische Prophetien der Zeit Asarhaddons und Assurbanipals, in: F.M. FALES, (ed.), Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: New Horizons in Literary, Ideological and Historical Analysis, Orientis Antiqui Collectio 17, Roma 1981, 71-115.

39 See, e.g., H.B. HUFFMON, The Origins of Prophecy, in: F.M. CROSS, W.E. LEMKE, P.D. MILLER, Magnalia Dei, The Mighty Acts of God: Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Memory of G. Ernest Wright, Garden City, N.Y. 1976, 171-186.

40 See especially R.R. WILSON, Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel, Philadelphia 1980.

41 See above, n. 14.

42 See, e.g., D.L. PETERSEN, The Roles of Israel's Prophets, JSOT.S 17, Sheffield 1981.

43 OVERHOLT, Prophecy in History (see n. 14), 66, 69.

44 Cf. E. CANCIK-KIRSCHBAUM, Prophetismus und Divination: Ein Blick auf die keilschriftlichen Quellen, in: KÖCKERT and NISSINEN (eds.), Propheten in Mari, Assyrien und Israel (see n. 3), 33-53; B. PONGRATZ-LEISTEN, When the Gods Are Speaking: Toward Defining the Interface between Polytheism and Monotheism, ibid., 132-168; BARSTAD, Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah (see n. 27), 87-89.

trees from the forest: it is difficult to resist the temptation of sacrificing the particular for the general to keep the picture clean.[45]

When we move from the identification of the sources to their interpretation and reconstruction of historical circumstances, it is important to take heed of the nature of different source materials. The ancient Near Eastern prophetic documents may lend themselves to apologetic defending of the historicity of the biblical prophets, but this approach hardly lets them speak with their own voice. I find the Near Eastern sources helpful in a different vein. They provide a patterned background for biblical prophecy and a sensible analogy of what prophecy may have looked like in Israel, Judah and Yehud, but they also help to recognize the points where the Hebrew Bible takes a course of its own.

One of the basic observations to be made is the diversity of the text types. The Near Eastern documentation of prophecy consists of a plethora of genres from oracles and oracle collections to letters, inscriptions, word-lists, administrative documents and so on, all dealing with prophets and prophetic appearances in more or less immediate past. The Hebrew Bible, on the other hand, is the only context where ancient Hebrew prophecy is documented, apart from a couple of Lachish letters.[46] It is a canonical composition *sui generis* in the ancient Near East, the result of the editorial history of several centuries and, hence, temporally distant from the prophets appearing on its lines. The Hebrew Bible not only documents the prophetic phenomenon in Southern Levant but also the emergence and early development of the concept of prophecy. This fundamental difference of the Hebrew Bible from other Near Eastern documents of prophecy must be recognized, otherwise we fail to understand what we are comparing.

What Is New in the Bible?

The prophetic texts of the Hebrew Bible represent the prophetic phenomenon in their own characteristic way, not only attaching to the ancient Near Eastern prophetic tradition but also drifting apart from it. Prophecy as it appears in the biblical texts ('biblical prophecy') is a literary construct related to the historical phenomenon of prophetic intermediation ('ancient Hebrew prophecy') but not identical with it. Of course, the written documents of prophecy in the ancient Near East

45 CARROLL, Whose Prophet? Whose History? Whose Social Reality? (see n. 16), 90.

46 I.e., Lachish Ostraca 3, 6, and (possibly) 16; see C.L. SEOW, in: NISSINEN, Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East (see n. 6), 212-218; H.M. BARSTAD, Lachish Ostracon III and Ancient Israelite Prophecy, ErIsr 24, 1993, 8*-12*.

are not identical with the actual phenomenon either, but the literary process behind the Hebrew Bible is significantly different from these documents.

It stands to reason that the Hebrew Bible presents very different challenges to the historical studies of the prophets in comparison with the remaining Near Eastern evidence, especially if we want to know something about the prophets as historical figures. None of the Near Eastern prophetic documents comes even close to, say, the book of Jeremiah, with regard to the extensive literary form, complicated literary history, and the highly developed figure of the prophet, all this constituting a world of its own, set in the late 7th century Judah but created much later. Because of this difference, as CARROLL pointed out, the comparative evidence provides a patterned *background* for biblical prophecy but it does not necessarily provide a sophisticated *reading* of biblical prophetic texts.[47] Sometimes it actually may even do so, but this must be judged carefully from case to case.

It would be hopelessly naïve to assume that the letters form Mari or the Assyrian oracles give a full and neutral picture of Mesopotamian prophecy either. They do not, because their ending up in the archives is the result of a procedure no less biased than the editorial history of the Hebrew Bible.[48] The procedures behind the texts are different, however, and should be evaluated accordingly, in awareness of the fact that the available set of sources our knowledge is distracted from, whether biblical or extrabiblical, does not yield a full and authentic picture of the prophetic phenomenon anywhere at any historical moment. Taking this as a starting point, we can rejoice over every new piece of evidence that helps to reconstruct the big picture—and hopefully also become more sensitive to details.

I happily recognize myself among those with the 'tendency to stress the factor that the prophetic corpus, similar to the rest of the texts of the Hebrew Bible, represents late literary creations of the Persian, or even Hellenistic, eras.'[49] I think this is simply true for the prophetic books as a literary genre. The fact that there was prophecy in the ancient Near East cannot be used as a counterclaim because the comparability of the biblical prophetic literature with ancient Near Eastern documents does not directly support any specific dating. There is at least one answer to the questions, 'Which Israel?', 'Whose prophet?': we can safely say that, in their present form, the biblical texts dealing with prophecy present the views of the Second Temple communities over several centuries.

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47 CARROLL, Whose Prophet? Whose History? Whose Social Reality? (see n. 16), 91.

48 Cf. NISSINEN, Spoken, Written, Quoted and Invented (see n. 9), 268-271.

49 BARSTAD, above, p. 31.

It does not follow from this by any logic, however, that the prophetic texts 'have no connections whatsoever with prophecy as a historical phenomenon in ancient Israel'[50]—first and foremost because they, even as literature, are part of this phenomenon, but also because there are enough good reasons to see a historical relation between these texts and the prophetic phenomenon. The comparative material, as I hope to be able to demonstrate in another context,[51] makes it possible to observe that virtually every single function of prophecy known from Mesopotamia and the West Semitic milieu has a point of reference in the Hebrew Bible.[52] The phenomenon was known in Israel, Judah, and also in Yehud; it is evident that the authors of the biblical texts had an idea of prophecy based on knowledge of prophetic practices. This idea they communicated to their audiences who were supposed to understand the message. This is beyond any reasonable doubt; the issue is rather how they used this knowledge and how they themselves contributed to the history of the prophetic phenomenon. Prophets as presented in the biblical texts do not necessarily conform to the pattern of prophetic intermediation as we know it from the Near Eastern documents. Sometimes we may have to look for analogies for prophets as they appear in the Bible in other sources — BRAD KELLE has recently found them among the Greek orators like Demosthenes.[53] But the question remains, whose prophets and whose audiences are we dealing with. If biblical prophets, who 'engage in discourse that is communicative, argumentative public address'[54] can be compared with Greek orators, can the same be said about ancient Israelite, Judaean, or Yehudite prophets who, as I contend, cannot be simply identified with the biblical prophets?

Prophecies were written down and collected in Assyria as well as probably in Israel and Judah. There is reason to believe that the biblical prophetic books—and some other texts, too[55]—partly derive their origin from collections of prophetic words based on oral performances

50 Ibid.

51 M. NISSINEN, Biblical Prophecy from a Near Eastern Perspective: The Cases of Kingship and Divine Possession, forthcoming in: A. LEMAIRE (ed.), Congress Volume Ljubljana 2007, VTSup, Leiden.

52 Cf. also BARSTAD, Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah (see n. 27), passim.

53 B.E. KELLE, Ancient Israelite Prophets and Greek Political Orators: Analogies for the Prophets and Their Implications for Historical Reconstruction, in: KELLE and MOORE (eds.), Israel's Prophets and Israel's Past (see n. 3), 57-82; cf., from a different perspective, LANGE, Greek Seers and Israelite-Jewish Prophets' (see n. 24).

54 KELLE, Ancient Israelite Prophets and Greek Political Orators (see n. 32), 63.

55 E.g., some psalms; see J.W. HILBER, Cultic Prophecy in the Psalms, BZAW 352, Berlin 2005.

and written down shortly after them.[56] Prophetic books are more than written prophecies, however. They document the transition from writing down oral messages to a literary interpretation on previously written texts, representing a shift from written prophecy to literary prophecy.[57] The literarization of prophecy has been called the proprium of biblical prophecy by JÖRG JEREMIAS,[58] which may slightly overstated; ARMIN LANGE has recently referred to similar phenomena in ancient Greece.[59] In any case, the development of prophecy in the Second Temple period, including the production of prophetic books, the shift of emphasis from oral to scribal prophecy, the authority given to the prophetic tradition, and the emergence of 'prophecy by interpretation,' is without rival anywhere in the East Mediterranean world. This development makes it an arduous task to acquire knowledge of the Hebrew prophets as historical figures. On the other hand, without this development we would probably not even know that there were prophets in Israel.

Towards an Answer

This article has been a *Problemanzeige* rather than a detailed attempt at answering the questions it has posed. Let me, by way of a conclusion, sketch out a proposal of how the question 'Who Is Talking Now?' with a reference to the historical dilemma of prophetic studies, could be given an answer.

First, the question can be understood as referring to contemporary voices. In order to agree what their communication on prophecy is all about, the scholars must understand each others' meanings of the concept of prophecy. The widespread agreement of prophecy as intermediation is very helpful especially when it comes to prophecy as oral activity and a social phenomenon; however, the application of the concept of prophecy to literary activity appears to be more problematic.

56 Cf. NISSINEN, How Prophecy Became Literature (see n. 25), 166-169; cf. BARSTAD, Prophecy in the Book of Jeremiah (see n. 27), 96-97. Cf. the 'memory hypothesis' of KAREL VAN DER TOORN, attributing a crucial role to 'recollections about the prophet that were shared among his followers and admirers' (idem, Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible [see n. 23], 195); this model relies strongly on oral transmission of the 'Acts and Oracles of Jeremiah.'

57 This distinction is introduced by ARMIN LANGE in his Literary Prophecy and Oracle Collection (see n. 25), 249-261.

58 J. JEREMIAS, Das Proprium der alttestamentlichen. Prophetie, ThLZ 119, 1994, 483-494.

59 LANGE, 'Literary Prophecy and Oracle Collection (see n. 25), 261-273.

This can be seen, for instance in the discussions concerning the relationship of prophecy and apocalypticism[60] or recognizing prophecy in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[61] The meaning of prophecy still depends partly on the speaker, and this has implications for the historical dilemma of prophetic studies.

Secondly, and no less importantly, the question applies to the biblical text and biblical prophecy. There is more than one construct of prophecy in the Hebrew Bible, each one representing the agenda of their creators, who have contributed to the literarization of the prophetic phenomenon; for example, the Deuteronomistic idea of prophecy is clearly distinct from that in Chronicles.[62] The invention of a new genre, the prophetic book, is an important factor in this development, since along with it, the few names we are accustomed to call 'classical prophets' became canonized, and the difference between them and contemporary prophetic practices began to grow. Alongside this development, 'the Prophets' refers to the canonical writings thus labelled rather than the historical figures whose words these writings are supposed to carry on.[63]

The people that are responsible for the biblical text as we have it, are the first voices to be heard in the biblical text—and they are historical voices, for that matter. If such thing as a 'history of prophecy in Israel' can be written,[64] this is what it should rather begin than end with, and I do not mean the chronological order of things but the focus of attention. The historical approach in prophetic studies should not only, or even primarily, be focused on the quest for historical prophets,

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60 See the discussion between J.J. COLLINS, Prophecy, Apocalypse and Eschatology: Reflections on the Proposal of Lester Grabbe, and L.L. GRABBE, Prophetic and Apocalyptic: Time for New Definitions—and New Thinking, in: GRABBE and HAAK (eds.), Knowing the End from the Beginning (see n. 25), 44-52, 107-133.

61 See the essays by TIMOTHY LIM, GEORGE BROOKE and myself in: K. DE TROYER, A. LANGE, (eds.), On Prophecy in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Hebrew Bible, Leuven (forthcoming); cf. H.M. BARSTAD, Prophecy at Qumran? in: K. JEPPESEN, K. NIELSEN, B. ROSENDAL, In the Last Days: On Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic and Its Period, FS Benedikt Otzen, Aarhus 1994, 104-120; M. NISSINEN, Transmitting Divine Mysteries: The Prophetic Role of Wisdom Teachers in the Dead Sea Scrolls, in: A. VOITILA, J. JOKIRANTA (eds.), Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Raija Sollamo, JSJ.S 126, Leiden 2008; A.P. JASSEN, Prophets and Prophecy in the Qumran Community, AJS Review 32, 2008, 299-334.

62 See, e.g., W.K. SCHNIEDEWIND, The Word of God in Transition: From Prophet to Exegete in the Second Temple Period, JSOT.S 197, Sheffield 1995, 245-249.

63 Thus, e.g., SEITZ, Prophecy and Hermeneutics (see n. 10), passim.

64 This doubt is by no means directed against JOSEPH BLENKINSOPP'S important book, A History of Prophecy in Israel (rev. and enlarged ed.; Louisville 1996).

because prophecy as a historical phenomenon did not die off with them. This necessarily implies that even literary prophecy is considered a part of the prophetic phenomenon, and that prophecy by interpretation is seen as a continuation of the prophetic process of communication.

Thirdly, it can be assumed that biblical texts include elements of ancient Hebrew prophecy, that is, prophetic intermediation of the oral/aural type, comparable to that documented by ancient Near Eastern texts. No-one denies existence of this kind of prophecy in ancient Israel and Judah, and we are well-advised to remember that it did not cease to exist in the postmonarchical period. The voices of these prophets are, by necessity, to be heard only as an echo within the constructs of biblical prophecy, but it can be heard if we know how to listen to it. The prophetic documentation from the ancient Near East is an indispensable tool in learning to listen to the fragmented voices of the Israelite, Judaean, or Yehudite prophets. But the extrabiblical evidence is not only necessary for understanding ancient Hebrew prophecy as an oral/aural phenomenon, sometimes involving writing as a medium of communication. It also helps to acknowledge the continuity and change between ancient Hebrew prophecy and biblical prophecy.

Comparative studies are of paramount importance in recognizing that the constructors of biblical prophecy have been aware of the prophetic phenomenon, its language, practices, and social dynamics. Evidently, they were familiar with the social and linguistic codes of prophetic intermediation, and this knowledge did not come exclusively from written texts but was based on experience. This made it possible for them to utilize prophecy *both* as a socioreligious pattern *and* as a written text. The book of Jeremiah provides a telling example of how a prophet is moulded out from elements that the audience could easily identify as prophetic, with the result of creating a prophet that virtually ends all prophets.

On the other hand, belonging to the class of literati, the constructors of biblical prophecy also knew prophecy from written texts. The prophetic books mostly hide their literary history by presenting every word as coming from the mouth of the prophet, but Jeremiah 36, again, gives a clear indication of redactional activity. The linguistic and formal proximity of biblical prophecies to ancient Near Eastern prophetic oracles suggests that the authors of the prophetic and other biblical books were well aware of what written prophetic oracle looked like. It is difficult to deny the possibility that they actually utilized written oracles, either by quoting them or imitating their style. This cannot be absolutely proven until we have identical or similar oracles of ascer-

tained archaeological provenance at our disposal; but if the editors of the prophetic books had knowledge of these texts, they may as well have not only imitated but also quoted them. In fact, it may be that the genre of the prophetic book would never have emerged without the existence of written documents of ancient Hebrew prophecy; if this is true, then written prophecy is a prerequisite of literary prophecy.

Redeeming Politics in Jeremiah

DAVID J. REIMER

1. Jeremiah and Politics

The political dimensions of Jeremiah, whether prophet or book, have long attracted comment. In personal terms, he experienced conflict at the local level (with the 'men of Anathoth', 11:21-23) as well as with the upper echelons of government and society (e.g, Pashhur in Jerusalem, 20:1-6; *contra* Zedekiah, chs. 37-38). Meanwhile, the literary ascription which assigns him the role of 'a prophet to the nations' (1:5)[1] along with the tradition that he was known to the Babylonians (39:11-14) broaden the political interest from domestic to foreign affairs.

In a previous paper, I argued that the 'political' and 'theological' are indissoluably connected in the Jeremiah tradition.[2] With that foundation in place, my question in this paper is: what resources does Jeremiah offer to assist the community in emerging from political chaos? The narrative framework of Jeremiah's traditions is one of confusion on every level, be it local, national, or international. The last, it could be argued, was all too clear, with Babylonian hegemony a palpable reality in the collapse of Judah. This, however, would be to underestimate the spectre of Egyptian interference so that even here, Jeremiah's public life spans an imperial realignment that persisted in exerting a destabilizing force on Judah.

In attempting to formulate a response to my question, there are some 'givens' to be acknowledged at the outset: (1) that God—the 'God of Israel'[3]—is intimately involved in the affairs of nations (*passim*); (2) that the royal line of David (e.g. 33:23-26) represents divine rule over Israel and Judah; and (3) that, at this time, loyalties are contested by those who claim fidelity to Yahweh (e.g., chs. 27-28, especially 28:6). It

1 Scholarly uneasiness at this designation is discussed by W. MCKANE, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, ICC, 1986, 1.7-8. As MCKANE notes, an inclination to limit this commission to Judah may already be reflected in the reading εἰς ἔθνος, found in some mss of the LXX.

2 D.J. REIMER, Political Prophets? Political Exegesis and Prophetic Theology, in: J.C. DE MOOR (ed.), Intertextuality in Ugarit & Israel, OTS 40, 1998, 126-142.

3 A phrase used 49× in Jeremiah, thus 22% of all occurrences in the HB.

is further widely accepted that Jeremiah's stance was able to nourish the political life of a people whose identity was forged for so long in diaspora living.[4] This 'resolution', however, is cast far into the future from Jeremiah's day.[5] The question remains about what exit strategy the Jeremiah traditions provide from the political morass.

At first blush, a recent article by KATHLEEN O'CONNOR might appear to coincide entirely with the question I intend to address in this paper.[6] A brief survey is thus in order to distinguish her interests from those I am pursuing here. Although the 'aftermath of disaster' frames the discussion, O'CONNOR explores 'the ways in which the book of Jeremiah seeks to rebuild the moral character of the community' (p. 81). The chaotic setting and communal interest overlaps with this paper, but the moral-building aspect distances it from my pursuit of the explicitly 'political'. O'CONNOR identifies seven facets of the book which contribute to the task of rebuilding community: (1) with its 'obsessive' depiction of destruction, 'the book provides language, indeed a symbolic world, for the community to see itself' (p. 84), both by asserting its reality and providing a language with which to engage it. Although the 'provision of language' is manifest, it remains difficult to see how Jeremianic 'speech' was used by the community to overcome its trauma. (2) The community's identity is redefined as 'broken survivors' (pp. 84-5), although Jeremiah 41-44 might suggest that this identity was rejected rather than adopted by the community. (3) A predominant 'rhetoric of blame' exonerates God and provides the survivors with the 'capacity to be moral agents' (pp. 85-6). (4) Jeremiah himself is portrayed as 'ideal survivor', thus becoming both symbol and example for the surviving community; his narrated experiences parallel those of Judah/Jerusalem (p. 87), but with a difference—he remains loyal to God, resists temporal powers, and yet cooperates with community 'insiders and outsiders' (p.

4 'In Babylon there is a strong maintenance of Jewish identity but also an accommodation with the state and civil society. This is expressed most famously by Jeremiah's injunction to 'seek the welfare of the city' (Jeremiah 29:7).' D. FERGUSSON, Church, State and Civil Society, 2004, 7. Cf. S.J.D. COHEN, From the Maccabees to the Mishnah, 1987, 29.

5 'Zionism comes late in Jewish history, after some 2000 years of exile had produced a religious/political culture adapted to statelessness and dispersion. I don't know how long it takes to develop a culture of that kind. We can find signs of the adaptation very early on—as in Jeremiah's famous letter to the exiles in Babylonia.' MICHAEL WALZER, explicating the roots of various kinds of political accommodation, The Paradox of National Liberation: India, Israel, Algeria, Isaiah Berlin Lecture 2006, 2006, p. 4.

6 K.M. O'CONNOR, The Book of Jeremiah: Reconstructing Community after Disaster, in: M.D. CARROLL R. and J.E. LAPSLEY (eds.), Character Ethics and the Old Testament: Moral Dimensions of Scripture, 2007, 81-92.

88). This latter phrase obscures the status and role of those who 'mysteriously' (p. 87) cooperate with Jeremiah: they are uniformly the 'faithful' officials. (5) Words of consolation provide a possible shape for the renewed community. This is especially seen in the 'Book of Consolation', but also (implicitly) in the language of 'building/planting' with its associations of divine intervention. (6) 'God, not Jeremiah, is the book's principal character' (p. 88) who, though he brings about the community's destruction, also 'participates in the community's loss' (p. 89); this sense of togetherness provides for a future partnership. (7) The book's loose literary structure reflects the community's moral disarray, so that its 'confused arrangement implicitly 'performs' the collapse of the world' (p. 89). It remains difficult to see how this enables or promotes the reconstitution of life for the community O'CONNOR seems to have in mind, given the view taken of the book's composition. O'CONNOR's claim—that literary confusion forces readers to find sense where it is lacking—is stated modestly, however, and involves doubts about intent (which she signals) as well as audience (which she does not).

O'CONNOR's valuable contribution in teasing out these strands of the Jeremiah tradition may be seen not only as the social/ethical backdrop for my exploration here, but it also holds within it some implicit pointers for the discussion below, especially in terms of the triangulation between prophet, community, and deity.

2. 'Sociolatry' (Kaufman)

The main theoretical inspiration for this essay has been drawn from the work of PETER IVER KAUFMAN, *Redeeming Politics*.[7] Although KAUFMAN's historically-based taxonomy of political theology, or 'political culture', has as its focus the relationship of church and state in the West, it provides a welcome framework for considering Jeremiah's resources for recovering from political chaos. The title itself reflects KAUFMAN's interest in the political ordering of corporate salvation—the redeemed community. He resists investigating 'the extent of government control and intervention' in church-state affairs (p. 3)—a well-trodden approach to the field—conceding that disentangling the religious and political threads is now nearly impossible.[8] Positively, he aims to investigate 'how ideologues staged the courtship between their

7 PETER IVER KAUFMAN, Redeeming Politics (1990). The title points towards the political expression of communal salvation—that is, politics that [are meant to] redeem.

8 'The interpenetration of religion and political culture defies precise conceptualization', claims KAUFMAN (9).

gods and governments' (p. 3). KAUFMAN adopts the term 'sociolatry' as shorthand for the political culture embodied in 'salvation' of the community by means of 'the political idealizations, symbols, and spells circulated to inspire loyalty, obedience, and service', so that '[s]alvation ... comes to depend on the perpetuation of the current distribution of political power or on citizens' support of some redistribution' (p. 5). In this way, he attends to the commingling of religion and political culture rather than their disentangling.

KAUFMAN sketches three strategies or facets of 'sociolatry': dominating the others is the 'conquest' model forged by the apologists of Constantine (Eusebius in particular) which makes 'empire' the bearer of *divine* government. The second model, termed 'clerocracy', arises out of conflict with claims made in the wake of Constantinian triumph which 'absorbed political office into the church's ministry' (p. 78). Here, KAUFMAN investigates the impulse for church officials to take on greater roles in governance than allowed in the 'conquest' model. The third model, 'crisis', issues from an apparent failure of Constantinian-style sociolatry. Here, adjustments are made to Constantinian claims by locating real governance in the hands of the Sovereign Lord, but with the massive *caveat* that this 'did not guarantee worshipers would be delivered from every misfortune' (p. 129).

Strong echoes of both 'conquest' and 'crisis' models can be seen in the Jeremiah tradition, less so 'clerocracy' although it is not wholly absent. However, my purpose here is not to impose KAUFMAN's categories on the Judaean prophet. Rather, KAUFMAN's historical case studies attune an approach which teases out possibilities for answering the central question of 'redeeming *Judaean* politics', or put differently: what kind of 'sociolatry' does the book of Jeremiah construct? Before proceeding to Jeremiah itself, a few more words need to be said about the nature of these differing models of sociolatry. All three flavours of sociolatry share the notion that rule is in the divine gift.[9] The matter for discernment is the nature of the relationship between God and human ruler. For Eusebius's development of Constantinian triumph, the two coalesce in harmony: as KAUFMAN sees it, 'to read Eusebius is to watch certain projections and ambitions congeal and form a coherent ideol-

9 The notion is an old one, of course, receiving clear articulation by Josephus. In his speech before the walls of Jerusalem, he contends that 'Fortune, indeed, had from all quarters passed over to [the Romans], and God who went the round of the nations, bringing to each in turn the rod of empire (τὴν ἀρχήν), now rested over Italy' (Jewish War, 5.367, H. ST. J. THACKERAY translation). The inevitable corollary was that resistance to Rome meant that 'you are warring not against the Romans only, but also against God' (5.378).

ogy, a political culture for the new Christian empire.... [Eusebius] believed that Constantine's conversion and conquests yielded empirical proof of the new religion's theological propositions' (pp. 18-19). But even prior to Constantine's conversion, God's sovereign hand was at work in Constantine's victories: 'God ordained that the empire should reconcile all contentious peoples to its authority before its politics were redeemed by the emperor's conversion' (p. 22). Readers of Eusebius, then, are left with the strong impression of an integration of church and empire as a consequence of Contantine's triumphs and conversion (p. 26).

While it is possible to read parts of Jeremiah and see the ploys of 'clerocrats' in play (perhaps Hananiah's claims in Jeremiah 28?),[10] the much more significant element is that of 'crisis'. One of the vehicles for exploring this adjustment to the 'conquest' model in KAUFMAN's treatment is the figure of St. Augustine, and in particular his *City of God*, written in wake of crisis in Rome.[11] On KAUFMAN's reading, Augustine could neither undermine Eusebian approval of Contstantine (p. 136), nor did he wish even to devalue political life more generally (although KAUFMAN anticipates criticism of this assessment). The pagan claim that Christianity was responsible for the defeat of Rome was met with a 'history lesson' which 'set the record straight' (p. 131). But beyond this, Augustine's work 'teach[es] Christians what they should expect (and should not expect) of God's sovereignty over history' (p. 136). In so doing, he 'reoriented the redeeming politics of Latin Christendom', constructing a sociolatry 'adaptable to crisis as well as conquest' (p. 131).

A clash of 'sociolatries' recounted briefly in Jeremiah 44 parallels the account offered by KAUFMAN of Augustine's massive *City of God*. In narrative terms, Jeremiah 44 comes at the very nadir of Judaean political fortunes, with the last gasp of life in Judah squeezed out by the assassination of Gedaliah and the subsequent flight from the anticipated Babylonian reprisals. Now in Egypt, the fugitive community receives an oracle of judgment from Jeremiah (44:1-15). The entire group

10 WILLIAM JOHNSTONE'S argument that Jeremiah's ministry drew together cult and court could also be construed along these lines: The Setting of Jeremiah's Prophetic Activity, Glasgow University Oriental Society Transactions 21, 1965-1966 [1967], 47-55.

11 In one sense, the link forged here is a natural one, given PETER BROWN'S observation that in his later works, 'Augustine appears to have deliberately made a study of the political history of the Old Testament, in order to show that it was God only who controlled the outcome of the policies and conscious intentions of the protagonists' (Political Society, in: R. A. MARKUS (ed.), Augustine: A Collection of Critical Essays, 1972, 311-35, quote on 331 n. 11 = P.R.L. BROWN, Saint Augustine, in: B. SMALLEY (ed.), Trends in Medieval Political Thought, 1965, 1-21, quote on 19 n. 11.)

is depicted as rejecting Jeremiah's announcement as a rejection of Yahweh who ruptured their relationship with the 'queen of heaven' (vv. 16-19). The claims made for the depth of relationship in 44:17 are striking: ancestral ('we and our fathers'); at the highest echelons of society ('our kings and our princes'); and completely widespread ('in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem'). Jeremiah agrees both with the assessment of the nature of devotion to the queen of heaven (44:21), and to the general principle—that offence to a deity is the root cause of their troubles—but disputes the identity of that deity. It is Yahweh, not the queen of heaven, who has been offended (44:20-23). The parallels to Augustine's polemic are clear, but there is a difference. Whereas Augustine can review history to 'set the record straight',[12] history is not on Jeremiah's side. So RUDOLPH observes: 'The fact was that Josiah's reform ended with his death near Megiddo and consequently with foreign domination by the Egyptians, with the Babylonians hard on their heels, who then obliterated the Judean state. One can take the history either way.'[13] As Jeremiah's opponents admit, they have vacillated. This is presumably the same group who in 42:2-6 committed themselves to Jeremiah's prophetic word, and to fidelity to Yahweh (42:6). Their rejection of the word sought from Jeremiah breaks the first commitment (42:10-12; cf. 43:2-4), and in their defiance in Egypt they reneged on the second. Much as Augustine was to do later, Jeremiah argued that 'his God had arranged the setbacks for a purpose', and so 'his God' was still sovereign.[14]

Having surveyed KAUFMAN's categories and set out some broad resonances with the book of Jeremiah, the task remains to look more carefully at the positive construction of a 'Jeremianic sociolatry' as it relates to two of the principle foci of government in Judah: the 'kings and officials'. [15] How does the book configure the redemption of the community's political life?

12 Cf. KAUFMAN, Redeeming Politics, 131-2.

13 'Tatsache war, daß Josias Reform mit seinem Tode bei Megiddo und damit mit der ägyptischen Fremdherrschaft abschloß, der die babylonische auf dem Fuße folgte, die dann das judäische Staatswesen auslöschte. Man kann eben die Geschichte so oder so deuten.' W. RUDOLPH, Jeremia, HAT 12, 1968, 261.

14 KAUFMAN, Redeeming Politics, 134.

15 The collocation occurs at Jer 1:18; 2:26; 8:1; 17:25; 25:18; 32:32; 44:17, 21. The discussion below does not attend to the imperial dimension of Jeremiah's 'sociolatry'. Some thoughts on this level can be found in REIMER, Political Prophets? (see n. 2).

3. Kings and Confusion

That the book anticipates a Davidic monarch as part of its redeemed politics is clear enough. Although lacking the same sort of sequence of 'ideal king' passages as found in the book of Isaiah,[16] nonetheless Jeremiah's traditions include a royal figure in the future hope held out to God's people. This is principally seen in two related passages, both speaking of such a figure as a 'righteous branch'. As part of the 'Book of Consolation', the divine declaration that a 'righteous branch [shall] spring forth for David' is coupled with the assurance that 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel' (33:14-18).[17] This finds earlier expression in the book at 23:5-6. The parallels can be clearly seen:[18]

23:5 'Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up (וְהַקְמֹתִי)	33:14 'Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfil (וְהַקְמֹתִי)
	the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause to spring forth
for David a righteous Branch,	for David a righteous Branch;
and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In **his** days Judah will be saved, and **Israel** will dwell securely. And this is the name by which **he** will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.[19]''	and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In **those** days Judah will be saved, and **Jerusalem** will dwell securely. And this is the name by which **it** [Heb. 3fs] will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.''[20]

16 For which, see H.G.M. WILLIAMSON, Variations on a Theme: King, Messiah and Servant in the Book of Isaiah, 1998, 30-72.

17 The attendant promise of never lacking a levitical priest (33:18) again shows 'clerocratic' overtones. The situation for the priesthood has parallels to that of the royal line. Only in 'promise', however, does the priesthood appear without accompanying 'prophets' or other officials in Jeremiah (cf. 31:14).

18 RSV rendering, altered to make parallels more obvious. Underlining indicates a plus against the parallel; bolded text indicates a qualitative difference against the parallel.

19 For 'by which ... righteousness', LXX ὃ καλέσει αὐτὸν κύριος Ιωσεδεκ = 'by which the Lord will call him is 'Iosedek [(9) among the prophets]''.

20 The entire context (MT 33:14-26; cf. LXX ch. 40) is not represented in the LXX.

The differences between these texts have been much discussed.[21] The two versions of the 'righteous branch' can be seen as offering different perspectives on this Davidic figure. The differences are telling. The focus of 23:5-6 lies entirely on this coming king, and the tautologous 'he shall reign as king' (וּמָלַךְ מֶלֶךְ) almost superfluously emphasizes his status. The ideal future days envisaged belong to him, and so does the name by which he will be called. While not 'democratized', this exclusive focus is at least shared in the version found in ch. 33. Now the promise firmly belongs to the nation, in whose days they will find security and Jerusalem is the one who bears the new name (cf. Ez 48:35). As McKane notes, it is not necessarily the case that ch. 33 inclines towards the priesthood (given 33:18), but at least the 'lonely eminence' of the Davidic figure of ch. 23 is 'modified'.[22] If, as some suggest, this passage (which lacks a reflex in the LXX) represents a shift towards the priesthood, it nonetheless attests to the staying power of the monarchic ideal.

Suprisingly, there is not a great deal more about the 'ideal king' in Jeremiah, although there is plenty about actual kings.[23] The famous 'new covenant' passage is remarkably devoid of such a figure (31:31-34), given the drift of the Isaiah tradition as noted above. Indeed, this lack is suggestive for the presence of 33:14-26 in the MT. However, there remains some reflection on an ideal king from the past. In the collection of royal oracles found roughly in 21:11-23:8 (its boundaries remain somewhat fluid), the oracle against Shallum/Jehoahaz,[24] Josiah's immediate successor, is framed in terms of an explicit comparison with his father (22:11-17). He is castigated for failing to exercise the 'justice and righteousness' exhibited by Josiah—precisely the ideal of the royal figure anticipated in 23:5//33:15. The twice repeated reflection, 'then it was well' (22:15-16), strongly implies that it could have gone well also for the son, and by extension any royal son who ascends to the throne. So although this passage has past reflection as its primary interest, the

21 In addition to the commentaries, see also B. Gosse, La nouvelle alliance et les promesses d'avenir se référant à David dans les livres de Jérémie, Ezéchiel et Isaïe, VT 41, 1991, 419-428; J.B. Job, Jeremiah's Kings: A Study of the Monarchy in Jeremiah, 2006, 116-7, 128-30, 132-36.

22 W. McKane, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, ICC, 1996, 2.861. While Ezekiel 34 will elaborate the connection between 'shepherd' and Davidic figure at length, this remains a juxtaposition in Jer 23:1-6. But 'shepherd' language although used of Judaean leadership about a dozen times is not tied explicitly to the royal figure in the Jeremiah traditions.

23 For which, see especially Job's study, Jeremiah's Kings.

24 Assuming this identification; for discussion, cf. Job, Jeremiah's Kings, 55-6.

implication of potential future well-being resonates with the 'righteous branch' passages.

However, the simple observation—that any 'sociolatry' of Jeremiah must factor in a royal figure—soon gives rise to complexities. One of Josiah's unique attributes is that he fathered not just one, but three future kings of Judah. His immediate successor, Jehoahaz, disappeared into Egypt (2 Kgs 23:31-34). While the book of Jeremiah mentions him in the oracle noted above (22:11-17), his death is not recorded in the book, although it is reported in 2 Kgs 23:34. It is difficult to know what role such an apparently marginal figure might play as a focus for some ambitions. A connection to Egypt can be seen in the Uriah episode (26:20-23), undated itself, but set in the framework of Jeremiah's brush with death early in the reign of Jehoahaz's successor, Jehoiakim. Does the captive king represent a threat? Jehoiakim was in any case the elder brother, apparently bypassed when Jehoahaz became king.[25] Jehoiakim himself came to the throne and, after an eventful decade, died, leaving his heir (and Josiah's grandson), Jehoiachin, to face the Babylonians. Upon Jehoiachin's departure into exile after only three months on the throne, the third of Josiah's sons, Zedekiah, is placed on the throne. So there are two (potentially three) 'routes' available along which the line of David might develop, and through which the hope for a 'righteous branch' might be realized.

So which will it be? Of Jehoahaz, enough has been said already. Whatever potential he held for the future was quickly forgotten. At first blush, Jehoiachin holds no potential at all. This goes beyond the hint that J.B. JOB finds in 13:18, a possible reference to Jehoiachin, of antagonism between Jehoiachin and Jeremiah.[26] In 22:24-30, the rejection of Jehoiachin/Coniah is categorical and complete. Particularly with reference to future hope, the oracle emphatically closes the door. Although he has 'children' (22:28, RSV for זֶרַע), the oracle continues: 'Write this man down as childless (עֲרִירִי), a man who shall not succeed in his days; for none of his offspring (זֶרַע) shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David, and ruling again in Judah' (v. 30). Although Jehoiachin was known to have sons in exile,[27] they do not represent viable options for

25 JOB considers the possibility that Jehoahaz shared Josiah's anti-Egyptian stance, thus commending him to the succession, but explaining also the interest in Egyptians deposing him in favour of Jehoiakim; Jeremiah's Kings, 54.

26 JOB, Jeremiah's Kings, 85, 101.

27 As known from the 'Weidner Chronicles', E.F.WEIDNER, 'Jojachin, König von Juda, in babylonischen Keilschrifttexten', in: Mélanges syriens offerts à Monsieur René Dussaud, Tome 2, BAH 30, 1939, 923-35. Still widely and accessibly cited from ANET, 308; cf. 1 Chr 3:17-18. For Jehoiachin's 'biography', see J.R. CRITCHLOW, Looking Back For Jeconiah: Yahweh's Cast-Out Signet, Ph.D., Edinburgh, 2005.

future hope according to this oracle. As BRUEGGEMANN comments, 'What could have been according to the promise of Yahweh now cannot be. The poet gives speech to the coming tears of Jerusalem'.[28] Still, he had the merit of surviving, and even within Jeremiah this judgment appears to be slipping. The differing ending of Jer 52:31-34 from that of 2 Kgs 25:27-30 offers a somewhat more optimistic frame of reference for Jehoiachin's fate. For the present essay, that difference is not so significant as the way in which 52:31-34 rehabilitates Jehoiachin, not only within the Babylonian court, but even moreso within the tradition itself. It at least prises open a door that had apparently been slammed shut.[29] Perhaps there is hope after all—even if the chink in the door allows the merest sliver of light.

This leaves Zedekiah.[30] Once again there are varying conclusions one might draw about this final occupant of the throne of Judah in Jerusalem. According to the report in Jer 39:6-7 (cf. 2 Kgs 25:7), at the fall of Jerusalem his sons were killed and he himself taken in chains to Babylon. Without surviving offspring, he cannot represent the vehicle for a future Davidic figure. Again, however, things are not so simple as they seem. There remain some clues that Jeremiah harboured hope for a political future from this line—or that leave open the possibility that someone could harbour such hopes. (1) The enigmatic prophecy of Zedekiah's peaceful death (34:5) has occasioned much discussion. This prediction sits uneasily alongside the report of Zedekiah's fate in 39:6-7 (and // 2 Kgs 25:6-7), and as STIPP notes, the brief notice of his death in Babylon (52:11) lends to the promise of a peaceful death 'almost ... a cynical tone'.[31] Again the tradition offers a kaleidoscopic rather than

28 W. BRUEGGEMANN, A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming, 1998, 205. While BRUEGGEMANN's words summarize the entire chapter, they most poignantly suit the conclusion to the Coniah oracle itself.

29 The question remains whether this hope includes the restoration of the Davidic line (J.D. LEVENSON, The Last Four Verses in Kings, JBL 103, 1984, 353-61), or whether it is a more attenuated hope that the community might enjoy the same favour as that shown to Jehoiachin (D.F. MURRAY, Of All the Years the Hopes—Or Fears? Jehoiachin in Babylon (2 Kings 25:27-30), JBL 120, 2001, 245-65). Evidence does not suffice to settle the question, but my own sense is that some hint of optimism here cannot be denied.

30 For evaluations of Zedekiah in the Jeremiah tradition, see especially H.-J. STIPP, Zedekiah in the Book of Jeremiah: On the Formation of a Biblical Character, CBQ 58, 1996, 627-648; assessment in JOB, Jeremiah's Kings, 99-119; cf. also J. APPELGATE, The Fate of Zedekiah: Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah, VT 48, 1998, 137-160, 301-308; J. PAKKALA, Zedekiah's Fate and the Dynastic Succession, JBL 125, 2006, 443-452.

31 STIPP, Zedekiah, 636. Cf. PAKKALA, Zedekiah's Fate, 447, who considers the various accounts of Zedekiah's end simply incompatible.

clear-cut impression.[32] It is also worth noting that the promise to Zedekiah of a peaceful death resonates with earlier such prophecies, and in particular that of Huldah to Josiah in 2 Kgs 22:20—not that they are equivalent by any means. (2) At least in part, the Jeremiah traditions portray Zedekiah as someone with whom Jeremiah can deal, even if those dealings are fraught and turbulent. Here, the sparsely but vividly narrated audience between king and prophet in 38:14-28 is remarkable. Following on an earlier interview where the message was both more brief and more pointed (37:17; cf. 24:8), here Jeremiah holds out hope not only for Zedekiah's survival, but his posterity as well (38:17), and then offers reassurance to the fearful monarch (38:20). In tandem with the botched proclamation of release in 34:8-11, such passages yield the profile of a king with good impulses but poor resolve. Ultimately, the lack of resolve led to a negative assessment of his reign.[33] (3) The name of the messianic figure in 23:6 as 'Yahweh is our righteousness' (יהוה צִדְקֵנוּ), clearly echoes Zedekiah's own name (צִדְקִיָּה/צִדְקִיָּהוּ). Again, scholars debate the nature of this connection. While it may be impossible to be certain about the intention of this name/designation, there can be little doubt about its effect in aligning this last king in Judah with the future of the Davidic line. McKANE's claim that the association between the two names arises from a particular exegesis vv. 5-6 which uses Zedekiah as a foil for its elements seems beside the point, given the similarity in names and the analogy of the variant patterns in Jehoiachin/Coniah (cf. LXX Ιωσεδεκ in 23:6).[34] Such judgments are also bound up with a tacit assumption that the perception of Zedekiah is uniformly negative, and this is not the case as STIPP, PAKKALA, and others have observed.

In sum, although the redemption of political life in Jeremiah requires a Davidic figure, the tradition both opens and closes doors to this hope being realized through any of the potential candidates. The judgment that the line of succession has been effectively obscured does not rely on any theories of composition or redaction, so one need not concur with all of PAKKALA's arguments on this score to affirm his assessment that an issue of dynastic succession is at stake, and that this succession is deeply problematic.[35] So the notion of kingship in Jere-

32 Such is also the case with the end of Jehoiakim: cf. Jer 22:19; 36:30; and 2 Kgs 24:6; see D.J. REIMER, Jeremiah Before the Exile?, in: JOHN DAY (ed.), In Search of Pre-Exilic Israel, 2004, 217.

33 On the dynamics of this movement, see STIPP, Zedekiah, *passim*, and JOB's response, Jeremiah's Kings, 103-116.

34 McKANE, Jeremiah, 1.564; cf. RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 146; JOB, Jeremiah's Kings, 116-7.

35 PAKKALA, Zedekiah's Fate, 449-50.

miah sees it as pivotal to the future of the community's governance, and in the gift of Yahweh, while being committed to the line of David without any obvious (or even obscure) path to fulfillment.

4. Officials [שָׂרִים] as 'continuity symbol'?

Another aspect of government remains which appears regularly, and significantly, throughout the book of Jeremiah—the 'officials', court functionaries who appear to be something akin to an aristocratic civil service. The lexical item שָׂרִים [*śārîm*] is the starting point for H.-J. STIPP's investigation into the 'aristocracy' in Jeremiah.[36] Although his interest lies specifically in its use in the book of Jeremiah, the distribution of the term across the Hebrew Bible as a whole is also notable. In terms of density of use Jeremiah does not rank especially high,[37] but in terms of simple numbers it outstrips any other book in the Hebrew Bible, שׂר appearing 56 times, all but two of them (51:59; 52:25) in the plural.[38] This is not so striking on its own as it is in comparison with Ezekiel, Jeremiah's younger contemporary, whose book contains only three occurrences (Ez 11:1 and 22:27 of Judaeans; 17:12 refers to Babylonian officials). This graphically portrays the importance of the group for the Jeremiah traditions.

Passages which cast the 'officials' in a negative light first claim STIPP's attention. The list he briefly identifies could even be extended.[39] What impresses STIPP is their resistance to any synchronic or diachronic differentiation (p. 9). The passages portray diverse groups at any given time, as well as drawing on episodes from different stages of the history reflected in the book. Most often, these 'officials' take their place in a list of offending groups across Judaean society; the first occurrence in the book provides a convenient example, as Jeremiah's commission

36 H.-J. STIPP, Jeremia, der Tempel und die Aristokratie: Die patrizische (schafanidische) Redaktion des Jeremiabuches, Kleine Arbeiten zum Alten und Neuen Testament 1, 2000; his preferred rendering is 'Patrizier/patrician'. For the etymology, meaning, and usage of שׂר, see NILI SACHER FOX, In the Service of the King: Officialdom in Ancient Israel and Judah, 2000, 158-63.

37 Jeremiah ranks eighth which still places it in the top third of books in which the term occurs, with Esther and 2 Chronicles topping the list.

38 In statistical terms, 1 and 2 Chroncicles come next with 47 and 51 occurrences respectively; for comparison 1 and 2 Kings have 25 each. It should be noted that these instances are not all of the same kind: in several cases compounds are formed which more closely identify a given kind of official.

39 My own list includes 1:18; 2:26; 8:1; 24:8; 25:18; 26:21; 32:32; 34:19, 21; 37:14, 15; 38:4; [possibly 38:25, 27]; 44:9[LXX 51:9]; 44:17, 21; 52:10.

pits him against a wide range of opponents: 'And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land.' But beyond such generic identification, the 'officials' in particular are seen to be antagonistic to Jeremiah. During the Babylonian seige in Zedekiah's reign, Jeremiah is accosted as he attempts to leave the city, being accused—understandably but falsely—of deserting to the Babylonians (37:11-14a). He is arraigned before the 'officials', not at this point more closely identified, who proceed to beat and imprison him (37:14b-15). In the next chapter this same group of nameless officials (this at least is the impression left by the flow of the narrative) have the capacity to strike fear into the heart of the king himself. After the secret audience between Zedekiah and Jeremiah, it is Zedekiah who swears the prophet to secrecy, specifically hiding his words from the 'officials'. On cue, after the audience is over, the 'officials' interrogate Jeremiah, but without result (38:24-27).

However, one family in particular emerges from the mass of officials as showing remarkable courage, acute judgment, and religious fidelity: this is the family of Shaphan.[40] As is well known, in Josiah's reign Shaphan was instrumental in the events surrounding the discovery of the 'book of the law' during the renovation of the temple and the subsequent reform (2 Kgs 22:2-14). His family was closely involved in the events of Jeremiah's life.[41] It was Ahikam ben Shaphan who served as protector to Jeremiah when Uriah the prophet was executed (26:24). It was Elasah ben Shaphan (along with the priest Gemariah ben Hilkiah, whose father had acted alongside Shaphan) who delivered Jeremiah's letter to the exiles (29:3). Two generations come together in the story of the burning of the scroll by Jehoiakim in Jeremiah 36. In a narrative which is both vivid and complex, and against the backdrop of a popular fast called as an initial response to the prophetic proclamation, Micaiah, Shaphan's grandson, reports on Jeremiah's oracles being proclaimed by Baruch at the temple to his father, Gemariah (36:11-13). Gemariah ben Shaphan and his colleagues arrange for a private reading which strikes fear into their hearts (36:14-16). They in turn report to the king himself who has the scroll brought, read, and destroys it (36:20-24). As the group of officials represented by Gemariah and his colleagues urge caution, the king rejects their counsel as well as the scroll

40 In addition to the Shaphan clan, others merit scrutiny here, 'Ebed-melech' in 38:7; 39:15-18 in particular.

41 'Throughout his life, Jeremiah may be seen to have been on the best of terms with the House of Shaphan.' JOHNSTONE, Jeremiah's Prophetic Activity, 51.

(36:24-25). The order is given for the arrest of Baruch and Jeremiah but—unlike the events of 37:15—it comes to naught (36:26, cf. v. 19).

Although this narrative is removed chronologically from the episodes with Zedekiah noted above, it is striking that their juxtaposition in the present arrangement of MT Jeremiah (chs. 36-38) places the actions of these officials in stark contrast with those of Zedekiah's court almost twenty years later. Perhaps there is more to this constellation of texts than meets the eye, however. Jeremiah 36:1 is set in 'the fourth year of Jehoiakim', and 36:9 in the fifth year.[42] Although absolute precision cannot be attained in these matters, at least it fixes the events in the cold winter court of Jehoiakim to the period of the battle of Carchemish (605)—the clash between Babylonians and Egyptians which saw Pharaoh Necho defeated—and the subsequent victories by Nebuchadnezzar in Philistia in 604.[43] Meanwhile, the setting for Jeremiah 37 is the abortive incursion of the Egyptians into Palestine in *c.* 588, raising the possibility that Egypt played a role in Zedekiah's turn against his Babylonian masters. The resonances between the two episodes grow, and at the same time place the actions of the 'officials' in each case in ever more stark relief.

Finally, notice must be taken of Gedaliah, Micaiah's cousin, who provides the culmination (and perhaps cul-de-sac) of this administrative line—at least so far as is documented for posterity. He was appointed by the Babylonians to govern Judah after the sack of Jerusalem, although his precise status remains obscure.[44] Jeremiah opts to remain in Judah under Gedaliah's jurisdiction (39:14; 40:5-6). Gedaliah's subsequent assassination by Ishmael ben Nethaniah, a surviving member of the 'royal house' (מִזֶּרַע הַמְּלוּכָה, 41:1), holds many puzzles. One of them is just why Gedaliah refused to believe ill of Ishmael when the plot, in league with Baalis king of the Ammonites, was reported to him (40:16).[45] Mysteries aside, it represents a final, fatal encounter between a

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42 The LXX reading of 'eighth' year (i.e., 601) at 36:9, favoured by HOLLADAY (2.255-6), is to be rejected with RUDOLPH (p. 230) and MCKANE (2.903).

43 On this historical context and its bearing on biblical historiography, see D. VANDERHOOFT, Babylonian Strategies of Imperial Control in the West: Royal Practice and Rhetoric, in: O. LIPSCHITS and J. BLENKINSOPP (eds.), Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period, 2003, 235-262.

44 As has been noted, the Hebrew text only uses הִפְקִיד (with either בְּ, 40:5; 41:2, or עַל, 40:11); the English gloss, 'as governor', is typically added in translation as e.g. J. BLENKINSOPP has observed, Bethel in the Neo-Babylonian Period, in: O. LIPSCHITS and J. BLENKINSOPP (eds.), Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period, 2003, 96-7 and n. 8; cf. VANDERHOOFT, Babylonian Strategies, 244 and the literature cited there.

45 Cf. REIMER, Jeremiah Before the Exile?, 214.

Shaphanide who had risen to be the ruler of his country, and a Davidide who never came close.

What of this layer of government, then? Again, as with monarchy, the book of Jeremiah gives us a mixed impression. On one side are the actions of those officials who mistreat the prophet, fail to give faithful service to their king, and contribute significantly to plunging Judah into utter ruin. On the other side, and represented chiefly by the Shaphanides, are those officials who attend to the prophetic word, seek the king's best interests and yet who, in the figure of Gedaliah, are ultimately overcome by forces bent on a course of action leading only to destruction.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, what materials does Jeremiah offer to assist the community in emerging from political chaos? Or, to return to terms used by Kaufman, what 'political idealizations' does the book of Jeremiah fashion in order to promote the realization of communal 'salvation'? The result of this brief foray into two of the prime foci of governance of the world of Jeremiah seems surprisingly negative. At this moment of severe community crisis, the hope of a renewed Davidic leader is held out, but without any visible means of that hope being realized. Similarly, when one looks to the officials who exercise practical power in administering community affairs, Jeremiah again offers two alternatives. Typically, an undifferentiated group are are seen to abuse the role, with their irresponsibility leading to disaster. 'Hope', however, might be held out for certain faithful individuals whose discernment, in retrospect, might have spared Judah much of the pain it suffered at the hands of the Babylonians. Sadly, however, these too are crushed by the violent forces of ambition.

Such a scenario leaves Jeremiah's sociolatry looking fairly threadbare. Far from being a negative result, however, such an observation has some explanatory power, and creates certain possibilities. The 'letter to the exiles' in Jeremiah 29 is often seen as the focal point of Jeremiah's politics of adaptation, so vital for survival in diaspora living.[46] The reflections in this paper suggest that such a politics is more deeply woven into the fabric of Jeremiah's thought than the simple pointer to ch. 29 might suggest. The very lack of specificity in identifying obvious

46 See notes 4 and 5, above.

vehicles for temporal power makes space for required accomodations to contemporary realities without blunting deeper hope.

While 'adjustments' are being made, hope persists. Part of the adjustment is to concentrate more deeply on the 'God of Israel' who, in Jeremiah, is the one who can 'pluck up and break down', and can also 'build and plant' (Jer. 18:7-10).[47] In a similar vein, infrequent but significant, is the language of a life being a 'prize of war', remarkably, for two faithful functionaries: Ebed-Melech in 39:18, and Baruch the scribe in 45:5 (cf. 21:9 // 38:2).[48] Much as Augustine warned his readers, fidelity to the Sovereign Lord does not guarantee immunity from suffering and set-back—but it does ultimately ensure that life will go on.[49]

47 Echoing a cluster of language which recurs throughout the book: cf. also 1:10; 12:14-17; 18:7-10; 24:6; 31:28, 40; 42:10; 45:4.

48 Cf. O'CONNOR, Reconstructing Community, 85. Her observation there that 'a narrow stream of vague future visions' results in 'the book promis[ing] little more than survival' is germane at this point.

49 I would like to add a note of thanks to my colleagues Professor Hans Barstad for the invitation to participate in this conference volume, and Professor Oliver O'Donovan for providing welcome stimulus to my work on this paper.

On Writing and Reciting in Jeremiah 36*

JOACHIM SCHAPER

The practice of writing plays a significant role in the book of Jeremiah. It is the book in the Hebrew Bible that devotes most attention to the actual 'materiality' of writing and to writing processes. Writing plays a remarkable role in Deuteronomy as well,[1] but Deuteronomy is concerned with the significance of writing in the context of the book's narrative of divine revelation, less with the material side of the actual writing processes. The book of Jeremiah, by contrast, devotes much attention to precisely that aspect, and, not unlike Deuteronomy, it describes the products of the writing processes – processes that are driven by the desire to preserve 'texts' which had been delivered orally, or were perceived to have been so delivered –, which are then delivered orally again: Written texts are (publicly) recited. Contrary to earlier prophecy, *writing is the intermediate stage* between the prophet's receiving of the spoken word of YHWH and the prophet's (or his envoy's) public (re-) delivery of that word. Why was the written documentation of the divine word considered so decisive? And what exactly was the relation between the written and the oral perceived to be like?

I am interested in the significance of the 'technology'[2] of writing, and of its correlation with reading, for the development of ancient Israelite religion generally,[3] and in the present essay I would like to explore this unusual but fruitful line of enquiry with regard to the book of Jeremiah. For the purposes of the present paper, I am not so much

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* I have great pleasure in dedicating this essay to Professor William Johnstone, my esteemed predecessor at the University of Aberdeen.

1 Cf. J.P. SONNET, The Book Within the Book: Writing in Deuteronomy, Biblical Interpretation Series 14, Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill, 1997 and J. SCHAPER, A Theology of Writing: Deuteronomy, the Oral and the Written, and God as Scribe, in: L. LAWRENCE and M. AGUILAR (eds.), Anthropology and Biblical Studies: Avenues of Research, Leiden: Deo Publishing 2004, 97-119.

2 Cf. especially W.J. ONG, Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word, London: Methuen, 1982 (reprint London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

3 Cf. J. SCHAPER, A Theology of Writing (cf. note 1), *passim*. The present paper, too, is part of a wider project on writing, religion and monotheism in ancient Israel which will result in a monograph which I am currently finishing.

concerned with Jeremiah 36 as a key to understanding the production of 'books' (i.e., scrolls) in ancient Judah (a topic which G. FISCHER has dealt with at length in his new commentary on Jeremiah)[4] or with Jeremiah as a 'major source of prophetic material relating to oral-written transmission and instruction',[5] but rather with the *correlation between writing and reciting* and its significance as a key example of the relation between the written and the oral in cultural production.

In order to explore the correlation between writing and reciting in some depth it will be helpful to ask where the Hebrew Bible mentions important *written* texts *being read out* to a public or to an individual. The number of instances of such a practice in the Old Testament is surprisingly high; let me just mention a few of the most prominent ones: Exod 24:7, Deut 1:5, Deut 31:11, 2 Kgs 23:2//2 Chr 34:30, Jer 29:29, Jer 36, Ezek 1:28b-3:15,[6] Hab 2:2, Neh 13:1.

For the purposes of this paper, I shall concentrate on Jeremiah 36, especially on vv. 1-10, but will use some of the other texts just mentioned in order to explore the cultural background of the practices described in Jeremiah 36. As is obvious at first sight, that chapter is permeated by an interesting concept of the correlation between the writing down of the oracles and their public recitation:

> 1 In the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD:
> 2 Take a scroll and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah and all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah until today.
> 3 It may be that when the house of Judah hears of all the disasters that I intend to do to them, all of them may turn from their evil ways, so that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.

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4 Cf. G. FISCHER, Jeremia 26-52, Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Alten Testament, Freiburg/Basle/Vienna: Herder, 280-307. With regard to the most recent work done on Jeremiah 36, cf. C. HARDMEIER, Zur schriftgestützten Expertentätigkeit Jeremias im Milieu der Jerusalemer Führungseliten (Jeremia 36): Prophetische Literaturbildung und die Neuinterpretation älterer Expertisen in Jeremia 21-23, in: J. SCHAPER (ed.), Die Textualisierung der Religion, FAT 62, Tübingen 2009, 105-149, and K. SCHMID, Nebukadnezars Antritt der Weltherrschaft und der Abbruch der Davidsdynastie: Innerbiblische Schriftauslegung und universalgeschichtliche Konstruktion im Jeremiabuch, in: J. SCHAPER (ed.), Textualisierung, 150-166.

5 D.M. CARR, Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, 145.

6 Cf. J. SCHAPER, The Death of the Prophet: The Transition from the Spoken to the Written Word of God in the Book of Ezekiel, in: M.H. FLOYD and R.L. HAAK (eds.), Prophets, Prophecy, and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 427, London and New York: T & T Clark/Continuum, 2006, 63-79.

> 4 Then Jeremiah called Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on a scroll at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the LORD that he had spoken to him.
> 5 And Jeremiah ordered Baruch, saying, 'I am prevented from entering the house of the LORD;
> 6 so you go yourself, and on a fast day in the hearing of the people in the LORD's house you shall read the words of the LORD from the scroll that you have written at my dictation (וקראת במגלה אשׁר־כתבת־מפי). You shall read them also in the hearing of all [the people of] Judah who come up from their towns.
> 7 It may be that their plea will come before the LORD, and that all of them will turn from their evil ways, for great is the anger and wrath that the LORD has pronounced against this people.'
> 8 And Baruch son of Neriah did all that the prophet Jeremiah ordered him about reading from the scroll the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.
> 9 In the fifth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah, in the ninth month, all the people in Jerusalem and all the people who came from the towns of Judah to Jerusalem proclaimed a fast before the LORD.
> 10 Then, in the hearing of all the people, Baruch read the words of Jeremiah from the scroll, in the house of the LORD, in the chamber of Gemariah son of Shaphan the secretary, which was in the upper court, at the entry of the New Gate of the LORD's house. (RSV, modified by the present author)

YHWH is described as telling Jeremiah to write down, upon a scroll, all the oracles the prophet has received. He is supposed to do that in order to make the house of Judah hear 'the words of the LORD'– i.e., in order for the collection of oracles to be read out publicly (vv. 2 and 3; cf. vv. 6 and 8). The explicit aim is to persuade the Judahites to abandon their 'evil ways'. The prophet duly dictates all the oracles he has received to his scribe, who is then instructed to read all of them from the scroll (וקראת במגלה אשׁר־כתבת) to 'the people of the Temple' (העם בית יהוה) and to 'all the Judahites' (כל־יהודה הבאים מעריהם תקראם) who will come to the temple on the fast-day. This is enacted by Baruch (v. 10): He reads the oracles, on the fast-day, באזני כל־העם. He then reads them to the circle of officials who have congregated in the chamber of the scribe (vv. 12 and 15; i.e., the chamber of Elishama, cf. vv. 20-21). Baruch is questioned exactly how the oracles were put in writing (v. 17); this tells us that the actual material process of writing down the prophetic words was more important to the ancients than it seems to be to most modern scholars. There is then a third reading, in the presence of the king and the officials surrounding him. As a consequence of this third reading, the scroll is destroyed, piece by piece, by the king himself (36:23). Thereupon YHWH orders Jeremiah to have the scroll completely rewritten. Baruch rewrites it and in the process adds more oracles.

In his fine book on scribal culture, K. VAN DER TOORN recently stated, with regard to Jeremiah 36, that

> According to the biblical account, [Baruch] wrote at the dictation of the prophet. This part of the tale, however, is historically suspect because it is obviously designed to prove that the collection had the authority of the prophet: *ipse dixit*, or as the Semitic idiom has it, the oracles were 'from the mouth' of the prophet. It is highly unlikely that Jeremiah took the initiative to put his oracles on record, and it was certainly not at the command of God. Prophets, as we have seen, were not in the habit of writing their messages; nor were they accustomed to dictating them to others.[7]

However, although very rare, the practice was not unknown in the ancient Near East. There is at least one example of that practice in ancient Near Eastern texts, and the text in question was found in Mari, i.e. N° 414 (= A.431+A.4883) in the *Archives Royales de Mari* critical edition. With regard to the action taken by the prophet and his scribe, and with special attention to Jer 36:4, A. MALAMAT writes:

> Documentation of divine messages, especially when ordered by God, is not unusual among the biblical prophets (see e.g., Isa 8:1; Ezek 37:11; Hab 2:2). The reverse procedure, however, i.e., a prophet petitioning a scribe, on his own initiative, to record the prophet's message, is indeed a rare event. Hence we have but a single instance of this procedure in both the Bible and Mari.[8]

So in fact we have at least one other example, apart from the biblical one, of an ancient Near Eastern practice of a prophet dictating to a scribe. As far as the procedure itself, i.e. the prophet dictating to the scribe, is concerned, MALAMAT makes an important point; Jeremiah 36:4 is indeed highly significant because of its unique content. As MALAMAT goes on to say, '[t]he main question for us is, of course, why the prophet required at all a scribe to whom he could dictate his messages', since 'nowhere else in the Bible do we hear of a prophet availing himself of another person in order to dictate his messages'.[9]

However, the passage in question is not just about the actual dictation of the oracle. V. 4 must be read in conjunction with V. 5: the ultimate aim is the public reading. The account of writing activities in Jeremiah 36 is one of the most detailed and most important in the Hebrew Bible. If it is discussed in Jeremiah scholarship, the reason for exploring it normally is an interest in the literary history of the book of Jeremi-

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7 K. VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2007, 186.

8 A. MALAMAT, New Light from Mari (ARM XXVI) on Biblical Prophecy (III-IV), in: D. GARRONE and F. ISRAEL (eds.), Storia e tradizioni di Israele: Scritti in Onore di J. Alberto Soggin, Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1991, 185-190.

9 MALAMAT, New Light (cf. n. 8), 186.

ah.[10] Even where that is the case, its significance is often underestimated, although G. FISCHER and K. VAN DER TOORN have recently redressed the balance somewhat.[11] Also, some attention has been devoted to the explanatory potential of Jeremiah 36 and similar passages with regard to the correlation between the oral and the written. S. NIDITCH writes about Jeremiah 36:

> Thus orality and literacy intertwine in interesting ways in this passage: the oral prophecy is dictated, written down in ink and read. The prophet does not do the writing nor the listeners the reading – these skills either being beneath the holy man and the king and most of his officials or considered the purview of special technicians, perhaps both. Moreover, the writing allows for the dissemination of a message but is not necessary for its preservation, at least while the prophet lives. Finally, this written scroll helps to bring about a change in status, the king's and Babylon's, through its transformative capacity as sign act.[12]

However, the material aspects of writing and its impact on the presentation and the 'publication', through recitation, of prophetic oracles are still being neglected. Most importantly, the correlation between the writing and the public recitation is overlooked; MALAMAT's analysis is a good example of that tendency. By contrast, G. FISCHER, in his recent commentary, sees that the public recitation is significant:

> Die Wendung קרא באזני, in Verbindung mit einem Schriftstück 'lesen in die Ohren, vorlesen'[,] kommt hier mit Abstand am häufigsten vor (7× im Kapitel bis V 21). Solches öffentliches Verlesen hängt durchweg mit wichtigen Momenten in der Geschichte oder im Leben des Volkes zusammen, wie die anderen Stellen dafür belegen (...). Jeremias Forderung nach Vorlesen des Geschriebenen enthält implizit den Anspruch, daß sein Inhalt für die Gemeinschaft sehr bedeutsam ist.[13]

But important *in what sense*? MALAMAT adduces an interesting passage from the Mari texts (a letter from the general Yasîm-El to the king in which the former relates the message he received from the *âpilum* Atamrum) which, in his view, illuminates the significance of the action described in Jer 36:4; I quote the excellent French translation provided

10 Cf. studies like K. SCHMID, Buchgestalten des Jeremiabuches: Untersuchung zur Redaktions- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von Jer 30-33 im Kontext des Buches, WMANT 72, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1996.

11 Cf. G. FISCHER, Jeremia 26-52 (cf. note 4), *ad loc*. and VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture (cf. note 7), 184-188.

12 S. NIDITCH, Oral World and Written Word: Ancient Israelite Literature, Library of Ancient Israel, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996, 105. Cf. generally J. SCHAPER, Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophecy and the Orality/Literacy Problem, VT 55, 2005, 324-342.

13 FISCHER, Jeremia 26-52 (cf. note 4), 290.

by the editors of the text instead of the English translation found in Malamat's article:

> [29]Autre affair: Atamrum, le Répondant (*âpilum*) [30]de Šamaš, est venu me trouver et m'a dit: [32]'Envoie-moi [31]un scribe très competent [33]que je lui fasse écrire [32]le message que Šamaš [33]m'a envoyé pour le roi'. [34]Voilà ce qu'il m'a dit. J'ai envoyé Utu-kam et [35]il a écrit cette tablette; cet homme [36]lui a suscité des témoins. [37]Voici ce qu'il a dit:
> [39]'Fais porter [38]cette tablette rapidement [39]et selon ce qui y est dit, [40]qu'il agisse!'
> Voilà ce qu'il m'a dit. [41]Maintenant, [42]je viens de faire porter chez mon Seigneur [41]cette tablette.[14]

MALAMAT points out that 'we have here a singular case in the prophetic corpus of Mari of a prophecy dictated to a scribe and, furthermore, in the presence of witnesses'. (It should also be noted that the scribe used by Atamrum most likely was an unusually highly skilled individual,[15] which also seems to be true of his biblical counterpart, Baruch.) By contrast, what normally happened was that 'the prophet deliver[ed] his message orally, usually to royal officials or governors, who would then pass on a written report to the king of Mari'.[16] On the basis of his comparison between the Jeremiah passage and the Mari text, MALAMAT assumes

> 'that Atamrum was not familiar enough with the Babylonian language and perhaps spoke a foreign dialect in the heavily populated Hurrian environment. Thus, a scribe was selected to render the prophecy into proper standard Akkadian for the royal scribes at the Mari palace. Alternate explanation might lie in the very contents of the message, which may have been of utter secrecy, and thus prevented from being delivered orally.'[17]

This is the point, though: the ultimate aim of the writing down of the oracle referred to in the Mari text is *not* the oracle's oral delivery, but its safe documentation. But this is exactly why the Mari text *cannot* really shed light on the significance of the action described in Jer 36:4, which culminates in the oracles' *oral delivery*.

With regard to Jeremiah 36, and concentrating on the 'publication' of the oracles which the chapter describes, there is one decisive question: Why does, contrary to the situation in Mari, the writing down lead

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14 Translation from D. CHARPIN, F. JOANNÈS, S. LACKENBACHER and B. LAFONT (eds.), Archives épistolaires de Mari I/2, Archives Royales de Mari XXVI/2, Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1988, 295 (the transliteration of the text, 414 [= A.431+A.4883], is found *ibid*., 294).

15 Cf. J.-M. DURAND (ed.), Archives épistolaires de Mari I/1, Archives Royales de Mari XXVI/1, Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1988, 391-392.

16 MALAMAT, New Light (cf. note 8), 187.

17 MALAMAT, New Light (cf. note 8), 187-188.

on to the oral delivery? What correlation is there between the writing down and the reading out of the oracles? In order to find that out, we have to adduce not the Mari texts, but other *biblical* texts on writing and reading that can help us to gain insights. Chief among them is Hab 2:2.

ויענני יהוה ויאמר כתוב חזון ובאר על־הלחות למען ירוץ קורא בו

The RSV translates this as:

> And the LORD answered me: Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so he may run who reads it.

This translation is not correct. I suggested a different interpretation of that verse in a recent article, an interpretation which has since been taken over and developed further by K. VAN DER TOORN.[18] There is no need to repeat the argument here. The essential point is that the oracles have to be fixed in writing in order for them to be announced publicly, presumably to ensure that the correct wording is repeated during every act of reading. In Hab 2:2, a town-crier, like the Babylonian *nāgiru(m)*, is entrusted with the public reading;[19] a YHWH oracle received by the prophet has to be fixed in writing and publicly proclaimed. As discussed in my article, the command in question should be translated as follows:

> 'Write down [the] vision – and put [it] in force! – [write it down] on the tablets, so that a [town-]crier may run with it.'[20]

The town-crier is supposed to run with it in order to proclaim the oracle publicly, by reciting it. The participle קוֹרֵא is not based on קרא ב 'to read in/from (a scroll etc.)'; rather, it is simply an instance of קרא 'to read out, to announce', and its use is reminiscent of that of קרא in Lev. 23:21: וקראתם בעצם היום הזה (RSV: 'And you shall make proclamation on the same day'). קוֹרֵא is the subject, and it is ירוץ that is linked with ב (which is employed in the sense of an *instrumentalis*).[21] קוֹרֵא thus refers to a 'town-crier' who publicly reads or announces the text inscribed on the tablets.

Thus the aim seems to have been to make the oracle public by having it recited publicly by a קוֹרֵא. My interpretation finds support in the fact that there are numerous references to such town-criers and heralds

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18 VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture (cf. note 7), 14; 179; 272-3, n. 22; 336-7, n. 11 and 12.

19 Cf. SCHAPER, Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophecy (cf. note 12), esp. p. 333, and VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture (cf. note 7), 14; 179; 272-3, n. 22.

20 Cf. SCHAPER, Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophecy (cf. note 12), 333, modified in: J. SCHAPER, The 'Publication' of Legal Texts in Ancient Judah, in: G.N. KNOPPERS and B.M. LEVINSON (eds.), The Pentateuch as Torah: New Models for Understanding its Promulgation and Acceptance, Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 225-236; cf. VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture (cf. note 7), 13-14, 271-272.

21 Cf. SCHAPER, Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophecy (cf. note 12).

– the Akkadian term is *nāgiru(m)* – in Mesopotamian literature.[22] So Hab 2:2 describes an oral proclamation, but also the production of the material basis of that proclamation: the writing down of the oracle, which was, apart from the actual proclamation itself, another constitutive element of the overall act of documentation and public proclamation/promulgation.

If one explores the problem further, one realises that, in Mesopotamian tradition, the term *nāgiru(m)* also denotes the legal witness confirming a protocol (as described in court documents; e.g. in CT 8 40a:2: *nā-gi-rum ša Bābilim*).[23] This adds a legal significance to the meaning of the term קוֹרֵא in Hab 2:2 and deepens our understanding of the link between writing and reciting in Jeremiah 36. Hab 2:2 is one of only three texts in the Hebrew that employs the verb I באר Piel. This term has recently been discussed in great depth, with reference to Deut 1:5, by N. LOHFINK and G. BRAULIK. Building on their arguments, I have tried to demonstrate that the verb indeed has a legal connotation and means 'to put in force', as in putting a law or a decree in force, *by reading it out publicly*. This is why

הואיל משה באר את־התורה הזאת

in Deut 1:5 should be translated as follows:

'Moses began to give legal force to this Torah'.[24]

This is also why the phrase כתות חזון ובאר על־הלחות should be understood as indicated earlier.[25]

The question that arises is: If באר pi. really has the afore-mentioned legal connotation, how does that fit in with the Habakkuk passage and with Jer 36:6?

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22 I thank K. van der Toorn for sharing this important piece of information with me. Cf. *CAD* N, part 1, 116-117.

23 Cf. SCHAPER, The 'Publication' of Legal Texts in Ancient Judah (cf. note 20), p. 234, building on A. F. WALTHER, Das altbabylonische Gerichtswesen, Leipziger Semitistische Studien 6/4-6, Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1917 (reprint New York: Johnson Reprint, 1968), 158. Cf. *CAD* N, part 1, 116.

24 G. BRAULIK and N. LOHFINK, Deuteronomium 1,5 באר את־התורה הזאת: 'und er verlieh dieser Tora Rechtskraft', in: K. KIESOW and T. MEURER (eds.), Textarbeit: Studien zu Texten und ihrer Rezeption aus dem Alten Testament und der Umwelt Israels, FS P. Weimar; AOAT 294, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2003, 34–51; reprinted in: N. LOHFINK, Studien zum Deuteronomium und zur deuteronomistischen Literatur V, SBAB 38; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2005, (233–251) 247.

25 Cf. above and SCHAPER, Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophecy (cf. note 12), 333 as well as *idem*, The 'Publication' of Legal Texts in Ancient Judah (cf. above, note 20), 231-233 and cf. VAN DER TOORN, Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible (cf. note 7), 13-14, 271-272.

To answer the question, we have to take the whole of the vision account into consideration:

> For there is yet a prophecy for a set term,
> A truthful *witness* for a time that will come.
> Even if it tarries, wait for it still;
> For it will surely come, without delay. (Hab 2:3)[26]

The vision is written down to make it known to the public and thus to put it in force. It is employed *like a legal witness*, to be used, if necessary, against potential detractors. Among the modern translations, the JPS *Tanakh*, influenced by the Ugaritic evidence, rightly renders יפח as 'witness'. This lends further support to the observation that the oracle's proclamation has a legal dimension to it.

The point of all of this with regard to Jeremiah is that we find, in Jeremiah 36, essentially the same procedure of 'publishing' and publicising prophetic oracles as the one described in Habakkuk 2, which in turn is best understood against the background of Deut 1:5. In the book of Jeremiah, it is the scribe who does what the קוֹרֵא does in Habakkuk. In Babylonian terms: Baruch functions as the *nāgiru*. This is why it is so important to concentrate on the connection between Jer 36:4 and the following verses: the written text of the oracle is important, but it is not the only important thing; rather, producing a written text is just one element of a fairly complex (legal or quasi-legal) procedure.

Deut 1:5 thus enables us to understand more fully the (legal) significance of the act of reading out/reciting. The point in all three cases – Deut 1:5, Jer 36:4 and Hab 2:2 – seems to be that the texts needed to be fixed in writing before they could be delivered orally.

Thus a three-stage process leading from the giving of the oracle (or other divinely inspired text) to its publication can be discerned: first, the prophet or law-giver receives the divine oracle aurally; second, the oral 'text' received from the deity is put in writing; third, the resultant written text is then delivered publicly through reading it out. The function of reciting the written text publicly is to put it in force legally and thus to make it a legal 'witness' against those to whom it has been read out.

Also, fixing the text of the oracle in writing serves the purpose of conservation: Jeremiah is ordered to produce a replacement copy as soon as the original one has been destroyed. Why conservation? Firstly, to produce a durable record of the oracles of YHWH as proof to be used, now and in the future, against the nation and the king, as becomes obvious from Jer 36:31. Secondly, we have an analogy here with

26 The translation is taken from the JPS Tanakh.

the documentation of prophetic oracles in other areas of the ancient Near East. There are numerous examples of prophecies being preserved in writing and stored in archives for the purpose of documenting the events of a monarch's reign and anything relating to such events that was considered important; probably the most famous examples of writing up prophecies for such purposes are the Mari texts, while the Neo-Assyrian era provides us with further examples of the same practice.[27]

With regard to the ultimate objective of the three-stage process of documentation and publication, comparing Jer 36:6 with Hab 2:2 and with Deut 1:5 is, as we have seen, highly illuminating. It seems that the significance of Baruch's public reading of the scroll can be fully understood only as a mirror of what seems to have been an official procedure of announcing legal texts (or texts considered to be binding in a [quasi-] legal sense). By announcing them publicly on the basis of a written text – so that no mistakes could be made by the קוֹרֵא or *nāgiru* – they were put in force. This is why it was not enough to store the written oracles for archival purposes – they also had to be announced orally and publicly to make them binding upon the people. The prophet – or, in the case of Jeremiah 36, the prophet's scribe – is thus made to enact (or imitate) an existing legal procedure in order to hammer home the point that YHWH's judgement is inescapable.

It is not by chance that the procedure described in Jeremiah 36 more or less mirrors the one described in Deut 1:5; this observation simply lends further support to the insights, won over many years, into the close proximity of Jeremiah and Deuteronomy and the relations between the actual prophet and the 'Deuteronomistic movement'.[28]

I would like to end by stating the two main results of this little study. Firstly, the practice, described in Jeremiah 36, of a prophet dictating to a scribe (in order to have the divine message he has received conserved in writing) is probably *not* fictitious and is not mentioned simply in order 'to prove that the collection had the authority of the prophet'.[29] In fact, it is a practice for which we have independent historical evidence. Therefore, the description of the act of dictation found in Jeremiah 36 most likely reflects an actual historical practice and may well have been inspired by an actual event in Jerusalem involving the historical Jeremiah and his scribe Baruch.

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27 For a discussion of one of the neo-Assyrian examples with a view to biblical material, cf. SCHAPER, Exilic and Post-Exilic Prophecy (cf. note 12), 330-331.

28 *Pace* N. LOHFINK, 'Gab es eine deuteronomistische Bewegung?', in: W. GROSS (ed.), Jeremia und die "deuteronomistische Bewegung", BBB 98, Weinheim 1995, 313-382.

29 Cf. above, note 7.

Secondly, the aim of the dictation described in Jeremiah 36 is, unlike that of its Mari equivalent, to conserve the text in writing *and* to make the written text the basis for a public oral recitation. As I have pointed out, that recitation is reminiscent of other recitations of written prophetic and legal texts mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, and it may well have been consciously modelled on the legal procedure that also seems to have informed Deut 1:5. It was not intended to ensure 'the dissemination of a message'[30] as such, but to promulgate a divine oracle along the lines of a legal procedure, with all the consequences that had in the political and religious situation during the reign of Jehoiakim.

30 Cf. above, note 12.

Sprachliche Kennzeichen jeremianischer Autorschaft

HERMANN-JOSEF STIPP

Dass das Jeremiabuch nicht zur Gänze der Hand des Propheten aus Anatot entstammt, offenbart sich bereits dem flüchtigen Blick.[1] Die narrativen Passagen sind überwiegend als Fremdberichte angelegt, wo schon die Erzählperspektive gar nicht beansprucht, die Stimme Jeremias zu repräsentieren. Doch auch ein Großteil des übrigen Textbestandes trägt die Signatur jüngerer Ergänzer, und angesichts der konzeptionellen und formalen Vielgestaltigkeit des Endergebnisses sehen sich viele Ausleger genötigt, die Anzahl der beteiligten Hände und den Zeitraum ihres Einwirkens recht hoch zu veranschlagen. Im gegebenen Fall können Eigenart und Dauer des Wachstumsprozesses sogar in gewissem Maß mittels empirischer Daten abgesteckt werden, da in Gestalt von Jer*G** und der Qumran-Fragmente 4Q71 und 4Q72a (früher: 4QJer^{b} und 4QJer^{d}) Zeugen eines Texttyps vorliegen – er sei zwecks rascher Verständigung der alexandrinische (Jer*AlT*) genannt –, dem gegenüber der kanonisch gewordenen masoretischen Ausgabe (Jer*MT*) insgesamt höheres Alter, also eine globale Priorität zukommt; er dokumentiert, dass die Fortschreibungstätigkeit am Jeremiabuch bis in die Spätzeit des Alten Testaments anhielt.[2] Die Kehrseite des prinzipiellen Einvernehmens über den enormen Einfluss späterer Bearbeiter ist jedoch der

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2 Diesen Standpunkt habe ich begründet in H.-J. STIPP, Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiabuches. Textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte, OBO 136, 1994. Neuere Einsprüche werden erörtert in DERS., Eschatologisches Schema im alexandrinischen Jeremiabuch? Strukturprobleme eines komplexen Prophetenbuchs, JNWSL 23/1, 1997, 153-179 (zu K. SCHMID); Zur aktuellen Diskussion um das Verhältnis der Textformen des Jeremiabuches, in: M. KARRER / W. KRAUS (Hg.), Die Septuaginta – Texte, Kontexte, Lebenswelten, WUNT II, 2008, 610-633 (zu G. FISCHER).

rapide Zerfall jedes Konsenses, was den authentischen Kern angeht. Angesichts der disparaten Lehrmeinungen kann man fragen: Enthält das Buch überhaupt Passagen, die in dem Sinne echt sind, dass sie zwar nicht unbedingt die mündliche Verkündigung des Propheten widerspiegeln, aber immerhin aus seiner eigenen Feder flossen? Und sollten derlei Stücke erhalten geblieben sein, sind sie dann noch auffindbar?

In diese Diskussion schalten sich die vorliegenden Ausführungen ein. Nicht mehr wiederbelebt werden soll allerdings die Debatte, ob unter den Prosaeinheiten in der buchtypischen geprägten Sprache, die ich unter dem Terminus „deuterojeremianisch" zusammenfasse, Erzeugnisse des Propheten zu finden sind. Hierzu bezieht bereits das gewählte Etikett Stellung: Die betroffenen Schichten – von den dtr Redaktionen bis hin zu den prämasoretischen Zutaten – sind aus konzeptionellen und sprachlichen Gründen als sekundär einzustufen, wobei über gelegentlich eingeschmolzene Vorlagen separat zu befinden ist; bei den jüngsten Wachstumsringen schafft die textliche Bezeugung vollends Klarheit. Beim übrigen Bestand – im Wesentlichen, aber nicht unbedingt ausschließlich die poetischen Teile des Buches – sind im deutschsprachigen Raum die Urteile zur Verfasserschaft jedoch völlig gespalten, und der hierzulande allgegenwärtige, mitunter zwanghaft wirkende Hang zur Spätdatierung hat mittlerweile praktisch keinen Passus mehr verschont. Wo Reste von Einmütigkeit überdauern, beziehen sie sich umgekehrt auf die Unechtheit, wie etwa bei der Götzenpolemik 10,1-16, dem Heilswort für Jakob-Israel 46,27-28 (// 30,10-31 *MT*) und den Babelsprüchen Kap. 50-51, wo die Anzeichen nachjeremianischen Ursprungs in der Tat kaum zu leugnen sind.

Die Frage der Authentizität wird beim Jeremiabuch überwiegend nicht an einzelne Einheiten gerichtet, sondern an Teilkorpora, deren Glieder durch Ähnlichkeiten wie gemeinsame Gattungen oder Themen verbunden sind. Zuvörderst sind hier die sog. Konfessionen anzuführen, die mittlerweile meist Jeremia abgesprochen werden, wobei namentlich das negative Votum KARL-FRIEDRICH POHLMANNS[3] Gehör gefunden hat; ihm sind beispielsweise GUNTHER WANKE,[4] REINHARD-GREGOR KRATZ,[5] KONRAD SCHMID[6] und HANNES BEZZEL[7] gefolgt, während

3 K.-F. POHLMANN, Die Ferne Gottes – Studien zum Jeremiabuch. Beiträge zu den „Konfessionen" im Jeremiabuch und ein Versuch zur Frage nach den Anfängen der Jeremiatradition, BZAW 179, 1989, 1-111; DERS., Das Ende des Gottlosen. Jer 20,14-18: Ein Antipsalm, in: K. SEYBOLD / E. ZENGER (Hg.), Neue Wege der Psalmenforschung. FS W. Beyerlin, HBS 1, 1994, 301-316.

4 G. WANKE, Jeremia. Teilband I: Jeremia 1,1-25,14, ZüBiK 20.1, 1995, 15f. und z. St.

5 R.G. KRATZ, Die Propheten Israels, 2003, 82.

die Gegenargumente HANS-JÜRGEN HERMISSONS[8] wenig Widerhall verbuchten. Für das Gros der Fremdvölkersprüche – also nach Abzug der Worte gegen Elam und Babylon – hat BEAT HUWYLER nachdrücklich für Echtheit plädiert,[9] freilich ohne dass sich GUNTHER WANKE in seinem Kommentar davon hätte überzeugen lassen.[10] Die sog. Frühzeitverkündigung Jeremias in den Kap. 2-6* gilt noch am ehesten, von offenkundigen Zusätzen abgesehen, als eine Art jeremianischen Urgesteins, doch haben verschiedene redaktionsgeschichtliche Hypothesen dort ebenfalls den unangefochtenen Bestand gründlich erodiert.

Betrachtet man den anhaltenden Trend, mag man zunehmend methodischen Irritationen verfallen, da sich die Einwände gegen die Authentizität in der Regel auf Spannungen zum vorausgesetzten historischen Standort des Propheten bzw. zum sprachlich-konzeptionellen Profil eines als echt akzeptierten Grundbestandes berufen. Je weiter jedoch das Kontrollkorpus dahinschmilzt, desto problematischer wird der Versuch, Inkompatibilitäten aufzuweisen, zumal bei einem antiken Propheten, der seiner situationsbezogenen, zuspitzenden Rhetorik wohl kaum den Maulkorb moderner Standards von logischer Stringenz und systematischer Kohärenz anlegen ließ und überdies selbst bei vorsichtiger Auswertung der biblischen Quellen rund zwei Jahrzehnte aktiv gewesen sein muss, wenn nicht länger.[11] Welches Maß an Folgerichtigkeit und konzeptioneller Geschlossenheit kann unter solchen Umständen überhaupt erwartet werden? Die Architektur vieler Unechtheitsnachweise bedingt, dass sie, je weiter getrieben, fortschreitend ihr eigenes Fundament unterhöhlen, um schließlich mangels Vergleichs-

6 K. SCHMID, Hintere Propheten (Nebiim), in: J.C. GERTZ (Hg.), Grundinformation Altes Testament. Eine Einführung in Literatur, Religion und Geschichte des Alten Testaments, UTB 2745, ³2009, 313-412, 358f.

7 H. BEZZEL, Die Konfessionen Jeremias. Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie, BZAW 378, 2007.

8 H.-J. HERMISSON, Jahwes und Jeremias Rechtsstreit. Zum Thema der Konfessionen Jeremias, in: M. OEMING / A. GRAUPNER (Hg.), Altes Testament und christliche Verkündigung, FS A.H.J. Gunneweg, 1987, 309-343 = ders., Studien zur Prophetie und Weisheit. Gesammelte Aufsätze, FAT 23, 1998, 5-36; Jeremias dritte Konfession (Jer 15,10-21), ZThK 96, 1999, 1-21.

9 B. HUWYLER, Jeremia und die Völker. Untersuchungen zu den Völkersprüchen in Jeremia 46-49, FAT 20, 1997.

10 G. WANKE, Jeremia. Teilband 2: Jeremia 25,15-52,34, ZüBiK.AT 20.2, 2003, bes. 389.

11 Die Angaben in 1,2-3 ergeben eine Spanne von vierzig Jahren, was bekanntlich auf Idealisierung deutet; vgl. C. LEVIN, Noch einmal: Die Anfänge des Propheten Jeremia, VT 31, 1981, 428-440. Belastbare Belege für prophetisches Auftreten unter Joschija fehlen; grobe Eckdaten liefern die Datierung des Tempelprozesses Jeremias ins Antrittsjahr Jojakims 609 (26,1) und die Auswanderung nach Ägypten bald nach der Zerstörung Jerusalems 587 (41,1).

materials in sich zusammenzubrechen. Indes mögen solche Erwägungen zwar die Skepsis gegenüber bestimmten Tendenzen der aktuellen Forschung schüren, doch ein positives Argument zugunsten der Echtheit irgendwelcher Passagen geben sie nicht her.

Dabei kann man die Schraube sogar noch weiter drehen: ROBERT CARROLL gab die Suche nach echten Kernen als aussichtslos auf, weil selbst bei Gedichten, die keinerlei Anzeichen fremder Herkunft an sich trügen, nicht auszuschließen sei, dass sie Jeremia lediglich unterschoben wurden.[12] Manche Forscher machen aus der Not eine Tugend, indem sie die Frage nach authentischen Komponenten in Prophetenbüchern als unerheblich abtun. Darüber kann man jedoch geteilter Ansicht sein. Es handelt sich hier ja nur um einen Spezialfall historischer Fragestellungen, die ihre Reichweite extrem beschneiden, wenn sie auf diachrone Studien an biblischen Texten verzichten. Ohnehin braucht wissenschaftliche Neugier die Wahl ihrer Studienobjekte nicht zu rechtfertigen und wird sich auch nicht an Versuchen stören, Relevanzdekrete zu erlassen. Wer es reizvoll findet zu erfahren, was ein später zur allseits anerkannten religiösen Autorität erhobener Prophet seinerzeit zu sagen hatte oder wie sich dessen eigene Zeugnisse zu den Hauptströmungen der zeitgenössischen Theologie und zu den Botschaften seiner Tradenten verhielten,[13] wird sich nicht hindern lassen zu prüfen, ob es Wege zur Klärung dieser Fragen gibt.

Ob allerdings Teile eines Prophetenbuches der namengebenden Gestalt zugeschrieben werden können, hängt mitnichten an unserer Wissbegierde, sondern an der Indizienlage. Die Identifikation authentischer Einheiten verfährt vor allem negativ, d. h. als echt gelten dürfen jene Stücke, wo keine hinreichenden Gründe dagegen sprechen. Das schließt selbstverständlich nicht die Nutzung positiver Kriterien aus, sofern solche existieren. Nun spielt aufgrund der literarischen Beschaffenheit des Jeremiabuches bei der Stratifikation seines Textbestandes der Sprachgebrauch eine Schlüsselrolle. Dies ist bei den sekundären Partien eine vertraute Tatsache, weil die deuterojeremianischen Schichten durch eine typische Phraseologie ihrer Gottes- und Prophetenreden

12 R. P. CARROLL, Jeremiah. A Commentary, OTL, 1986, 47. Einen festen Boden eigener Art glaubt GEORG FISCHER gefunden zu haben, wenn er das gesamte Buch als pseudepigraphisches Werk eines theologischen Schriftstellers aus dem frühen 4. Jh. hinstellt, der authentisches Material verarbeitet haben kann, dann jedoch so, dass es für immer unserem Blick entzogen bleibt. Vgl. zuletzt Jeremia, HThKAT, 2 Bde., 2005; Jeremia. Der Stand der theologischen Diskussion, 2007, 103-114.161-163.

13 Eine Lanze für solche Fragestellungen bricht etwa R.E. CLEMENTS, The Prophet and his Editors, in: D.J.A. CLINES u. a. (ed.), The Bible in Three Dimensions. Essays in Celebrating of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield, JSOT.S 87, 1990, 203-220.

hervorstechen. Die Aussagekraft der Diktion reicht bis hin zu den jüngsten Retuschen, denn das stärkste Argument für den späten Ursprung des masoretischen Sonderguts bildet der prämasoretische Idiolekt, also sein umfangreicher Fundus an exklusivem Vokabular, der nur auf Expansion im masoretischen Textüberlieferungsstrang rückführbar ist, nicht aber auf Kürzung im alexandrinischen, zumal er typische Kennzeichen später Stadien des Bibelhebräischen einschließt.[14] Doch auch zum Beleg der Echtheit hat man sprachliche Indizien angeführt; so sind längst einige Ausdrücke aufgefallen, die nur oder fast ausschließlich im Jeremiabuch vorkommen und dabei jeweils über verschiedene poetische Teilkorpora verstreut sind, die die besten Kandidaten für jeremianische Urheberschaft darstellen. Dies legt den Schluss nahe, dass die betroffenen Textgruppen durch eine gemeinsame Individualstilistik verklammert sind, also ebenfalls an einem Idiolekt teilhaben, was nur erklärlich ist, wenn sie auf denselben Autor zurückgehen; fehlen obendrein zureichende Hürden, das Material mit einem Propheten in Juda um die Wende vom 7. zum 6. Jahrhundert zu verbinden, ist es nur natürlich, jenen Verfasser mit Jeremia zu identifizieren. Der vorliegende Aufsatz artikuliert nun den Eindruck, dass das Potenzial sprachlicher Kriterien zur Namhaftmachung authentischer Passagen im Jeremiabuch bislang noch nicht ausgeschöpft wurde. Dazu sollen weitere Merkmale angeführt werden, die die Annahme untermauern, dass das Buch eigene Schöpfungen des Propheten Jeremia enthält, und die helfen, deren Umfang abzustecken.

Das nachfolgende Verzeichnis bietet eine – gewiss unvollständige – Liste von 104 sprachlichen Phänomenen, denen Zeugniskraft für die genannte Fragestellung zugetraut wird. Dabei handelt es sich um Lexeme, Wortverbindungen sowie weitere stilistische Erscheinungen, die nicht an ein konkretes Vokabular gekoppelt sind. Die Kopfzeilen der Einträge benennen die distinktiven Merkmale in den zitierten Passagen. Im Interesse der bequemen Erschließung wurde das Material, soweit möglich, lemmatisiert und alphabetisch geordnet; bei Wortver-

14 Das Vokabular des prämasoretischen Idiolekts ist fortschreitend inventarisiert bei H.-J. STIPP, Linguistic Peculiarities of the Masoretic Edition of the Book of Jeremiah: An Updated Index, JNWSL 23/2, 1997, 181-202; DERS., Deuterojeremianische Konkordanz, ATSAT 63, 1998, passim; zur Bewertung vgl. ders., Zur aktuellen Diskussion (Anm. 2), 612-617; sowie einerseits H. ENGEL, Erfahrungen mit der Septuaginta-Fassung des Jeremiabuches im Rahmen des Projektes „Septuaginta Deutsch", in: H.-J. FABRY / D. BÖHLER (Hg.), Im Brennpunkt: Die Septuaginta, Bd. 3: Studien zur Theologie, Anthropologie, Ekklesiologie, Eschatologie und Liturgie der Griechischen Bibel, BWANT 174, 2007, 80-96, 83f.; andererseits G. FISCHER, Die Diskussion um den Jeremiatext, in: M. KARRER / W. KRAUS (Hg.), Die Septuaginta (Anm. 2), 592-609, 607-609.

bindungen wird dazu am linken Rand der Kopfzeile ein charakteristisches Lexem herausgestellt, das für die alphabetische Platzierung verantwortlich ist. Da mitunter mehrere Lexeme als typisch gelten können, sind erforderlichenfalls an den alphabetischen Orten alternativer Kennworte Verweise angebracht (⇒). Am Ende der alphabetischen Liste folgen die rein stilistisch definierten Phänomene, denen ein gemeinsames Vokabular fehlt. Die Eintragungen werden, wo nötig, durch Verweise auf verwandte Phänomene abgeschlossen, deren vergleichende Beachtung angebracht erscheint.

Zur kurz gefassten Definition der distinktiven Merkmale werden folgende Schreibkonventionen angewandt:

X Y	feste Wortverbindung
X + Y	feste unmittelbare Abfolge (obligatorische Kontaktstellung)
X → Y	feste Abfolge (ohne obligatorische Kontaktstellung)
X, Y	Kollokation bzw. Nahstellung, z. B. in Koordination oder Parallelismus
Y \ X	alternative Elemente: X oder Y
(X)	fakultatives Element

Die globale Priorität des alexandrinischen Jeremiabuches macht den Ausgang von dieser Textform verbindlich, sofern keine guten Gründe für eine sekundäre Entwicklung auf ihrer Seite sprechen. Im Rahmen dieses Inventars ist es jedoch unmöglich, aber auch entbehrlich, die Lesartendifferenzen innerhalb der zitierten Passagen vollständig zu verzeichnen; dies muss einer textkritischen Synopse zum Jeremiabuch vorbehalten bleiben.[15] Hier können nur solche alexandrinischen Abweichungen vermerkt werden, die den Zeugniswert des Materials für das Beweisziel beeinflussen. Dabei kommen folgende Siglen zum Einsatz:

[…]	masoretischer Überschuss
<…>	rückübersetzter alexandrinischer Überschuss
\	qualitative Variante: Rechts vom Schrägstrich (bei linksläufiger Schrift also zuerst) steht die masoretische (bzw. bei unterschiedlicher Interpretation eines gemeinsamen Konsonantenbestands: die tiberische) Lesart; links davon folgt die alexandrinische in rückübersetzter Form.
°…°	Verweis auf eine nicht explizierte qualitative Variante in *AlT*. Anstelle des durch °…° gekennzeichneten Passus enthält die

15 Eine solche befindet sich in Vorbereitung; vgl. einstweilen H.-J. STIPP, Textkritische Synopse zum Jeremiabuch, 5. interne, korrigierte Auflage, Manuskript München 2008.

alexandrinische Textform eine abweichende Lesart, deren Zitation im gegebenen Rahmen mangels Relevanz entbehrlich erscheint.

* Drehachse: Die dem Drehachsensymbol benachbarten Worte stehen im alexandrinischen Text in umgekehrter Reihenfolge.

… § Grenzzeichen: Wo nötig, stecken Grenzzeichen die Reichweite einer Notation ab. § markiert den Beginn und # das Ende.

(ᵠ…) Qere.

Der nachstehende Katalog ist eine Datensammlung, die ihre Einträge nur nach rein formalen Ordnungsprinzipien auflisten kann, wie es mit dem alphabetischen Arrangement geschieht; deshalb werden notwendig Erscheinungen von sehr unterschiedlicher Aussagekraft aneinandergereiht. Der jeweilige Beweiswert ist nur Fall für Fall abschätzbar, da er von mehreren Variablen abhängt, darunter namentlich der Anzahl und Distribution der Belege, aber auch dem Grad ihrer Auffälligkeit, denn je weniger ein Phänomen ins Auge sticht, desto geringer ist die Gefahr sekundärer Imitation, wie sie etwa in der deuteronomistischen Tradition mit ihrem prägnanten Formelschatz so gängig ist; im Gegenzug steigt die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass der Ausdruck eine spontane, individuelle Sprechweise widerspiegelt, also einen Idiolekt, der auf gemeinsame Autorschaft deutet.

Einer Erläuterung bedarf die Distribution, denn es werden keineswegs nur Erscheinungen berücksichtigt, die auf einschlägige Teilkorpora des Jer beschränkt sind. Ob ein Verteilungsmuster Signifikanz besitzt, ist nur fallweise entscheidbar, doch häufen sich einige rekurrente Typen. Als exklusive Merkmale gelten solche, die ausschließlich in Jer auftreten. Daneben existiert ein Spektrum der Semiexklusivität, wenn etwa Phänomene außerhalb des Jer nur in sehr enger Streuung begegnen (wie סָכָל, sonst nur in Koh) oder zumindest innerhalb des Corpus Propheticum (CP: Jes – Mal) einzigartig dastehen (wie die Koordination von ידע-G Imperativ und ראה-G Imperativ). Von ähnlicher Art sind Lieblingsworte (wie שֶׁפִי) und -wendungen (wie die Kollokation von בוש und חתת), wo die weit überwiegende Mehrheit der Belege auf Jer entfällt. Es kann nicht ausgeschlossen werden, dass einzelne Parallelen auf Zufall beruhen, doch wie bei Konvergenzbeweisen üblich, ist das Gesamt der Beobachtungen zu bewerten. Unbeachtet bleiben Belegpaare, die aus den buchtypischen Dubletten resultieren (wie 5,9 // 5,29 // 9,8; 6,13-14 // [8,10b-12]; 6,22b-24 // 50,41-43; 11,20 // 20,12 usw.), es sei denn, ein signifikantes Merkmal kommt auch andernorts vor (wie יַרְכְּתֵי־אָרֶץ 6,22 // 50,41 neben 25,32; 31,8); ebenso werden natürlich Se-

quenzen verzeichnet, die in unterschiedlichen Zusammenhängen wiederkehren (wie 4,4c-e // 21,12d-f: חֵמָה → מִכַּבֶּה אֵין).[16]

אַבִּיר ⇒ קוֹל מִקּוֹל + Substantiv (st cs) + אַבִּיר

אבל **אבל mit Subjekt יבשׁ, אֶרֶץ**
12,4 עַד־מָתַי תֶּאֱבַל הָאָרֶץ °וְעֵשֶׂב כָּל°־הַשָּׂדֶה יִיבָשׁ
23,10 כִּי־מִפְּנֵי אָלָה \ אֵלֶּה אָבְלָה הָאָרֶץ יָבְשׁוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר
Für den Vergleich wurden wegen Zuordnungsproblemen אבל I und II herangezogen sowie יָבֵשׁ als Verb und Adjektiv. Die Kollokation von אבל und יבשׁ ist nochmals belegt in Am 1,2.

אוי **שדד → הוי \ אוי**
4,13 אוֹי לָנוּ כִּי שֻׁדָּדְנוּ
48,1 הוֹי אֶל־נְבוֹ כִּי שֻׁדָּדָה
Schon die Abfolge אוי \ הוי → כִּי + שדד ist exklusiv.
⇒ שׁדד שֻׁדַּדְנוּ

אֵיךְ **אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ → zitierter Nominalsatz: Prädikat + Subjekt אֲנָחְנוּ**
8,8 אֵיכָה תֹּאמְרוּ חֲכָמִים אֲנַחְנוּ
48,14 אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ גִּבּוֹרִים אֲנָחְנוּ
Die vorwurfsvolle Frage אֵיךְ אמר ist sonst belegt mit אָמַרְתָּ Gen 26,9; תֹּאמַר Ri 16,15; תֹּאמְרוּ Jes 19,11; Ps 11,1; תֹּאמְרִי Jer 2,23. Vgl. ferner 2 Sam 12,18.

אמר **אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי אַךְ**
5,4 וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי אַךְ־דַּלִּים הֵם
10,19 וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי אַךְ זֶה חֳלִי

אמר **Vorwurfsvolle Feststellung (in Rede): *du / ihr / er / sie … sagen (Vgh./Ggw.): ich / wir … nicht …***
Ein Sprecher zitiert seine Adressaten mit einer Weigerung oder der Bestreitung von Schuld.
2,20 (אֶעֱבֹר Qרֹ) וַתֹּאמְרִי לֹא אֶעֱבֹד
2,23 אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרִי לֹא נִטְמֵאתִי
2,35 הִנְנִי נִשְׁפָּט אוֹתָךְ עַל־אָמְרֵךְ לֹא חָטָאתִי
6,16 וְשַׁאֲלוּ לִנְתִיבוֹת עוֹלָם <וּרְאוּ> אֵי־זֶה דֶּרֶךְ הַטּוֹב וּלְכוּ־בָהּ … וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נֵלֵךְ

16 Ein Teil der registrierten Phänomene wurde bereits früher beobachtet und findet sich in der Literatur. Allerdings musste der Versuch, durchgehend die erstmaligen Entdecker zu ermitteln, als aussichtslos aufgegeben werden; zudem weichen die Definitionen der sprachlichen Erscheinungen nicht selten im Detail voneinander ab. Deshalb fehlen Verweise auf Vorgänger, womit jedoch im Einzelfall kein Anspruch auf wissenschaftliche Priorität erhoben wird.

6,17	הַקְשִׁיבוּ לְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נַקְשִׁיב
22,21	אָמַרְתִּ לֹא אֶשְׁמָע
50,7	כָּל־מוֹצְאֵיהֶם אֲכָלוּם וְצָרֵיהֶם אָמְרוּ לֹא °נֶאְשָׁם

Sonst

Spr 30,20	כֵּן דֶּרֶךְ אִשָּׁה מְנָאָפֶת אָכְלָה וּמָחֲתָה פִּיהָ וְאָמְרָה לֹא־פָעַלְתִּי אָוֶן

אסף	**הֵאָסְפוּ וְנָבוֹא**
4,5	הֵאָסְפוּ וְנָבוֹאָה אֶל־עָרֵי הַמִּבְצָר
8,14	הֵאָסְפוּ וְנָבוֹא אֶל־עָרֵי הַמִּבְצָר

Auch die Fortsetzung אֶל־עָרֵי הַמִּבְצָר ist charakteristisch.

אֲרִיֵה	**מַשְׁחִית ,אֲרִיֵה**
2,30	אָכְלָה חַרְבְּ[כֶם] נְבִיאֵיכֶם כְּאַרְיֵה מַשְׁחִית
4,7	עָלָה אֲרִיֵה מִסֻּבְכוֹ וּמַשְׁחִית גּוֹיִם נָסָע

אֶרֶץ	**אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ עִיר וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ**
8,16	וַיֹּאכְלוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ עִיר וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
47,2	וְיִשְׁטְפוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ עִיר וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ

Vergleiche

46,8 *MT*	אֲכַסֵּה־אֶרֶץ אֹבִידָה [עִיר וְ]יֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ

Bereits die Wendung עִיר וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ ist exklusiv. אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ sonst Dtn 33,16; Jes 34,1; Ez 19,7; 30,12; Mi 1,2; Ps 24,1; variiert Ez 12,19; 32,15; Ps 89,12.

אֶרֶץ	**יַרְכְּתֵי־אֶרֶץ**	⇒ יַרְכָה
	שִׁמְעִי אֶרֶץ	⇒ שִׁמְעִי אֶרֶץ שמע
	⇒ קוֹל	מִקּוֹל + X ➔ רעש mit Subjekt אֶרֶץ

בוש	**בוש mit Gradpartikel מְאֹד**
9,18	בֹּשְׁנוּ מְאֹד כִּי־עָזָבְנוּ אָרֶץ
20,11	בֹּשׁוּ מְאֹד כִּי־לֹא הִשְׂכִּילוּ
50,12	בוֹשָׁה אִמְּכֶם מְאֹד חָפְרָה יוֹלַדְתְּכֶם

Vergleiche

Ps 6,11	יֵבֹשׁוּ וְיִבָּהֲלוּ מְאֹד כָּל־אֹיְבָי יָשֻׁבוּ יֵבֹשׁוּ רָגַע (BHS: dl יבשו ו)

בוש	**חתת ,בוש**
8,9	הֹבִישׁוּ חֲכָמִים חַתּוּ וַיִּלָּכְדוּ
14,4	בַּעֲבוּר הָאֲדָמָה חַתָּה כִּי לֹא־הָיָה גֶשֶׁם [בָּאָרֶץ] בֹּשׁוּ אִכָּרִים חָפוּ רֹאשָׁם
17,18	יֵבֹשׁוּ רֹדְפַי וְאַל־אֵבֹשָׁה אָנִי יֵחַתּוּ הֵמָּה וְאַל־אֵחַתָּה אָנִי
48,1	כִּי שֻׁדָּדָה [הֹבִישָׁה] נִלְכְּדָה קִרְיָתַיִם הֹבִישָׁה הַמִּשְׂגָּב וָחָתָּה
48,20	הֹבִישׁ מוֹאָב כִּי־חַתָּה
48,39	אֵיךְ חַתָּה הֵילִילוּ אֵיךְ הִפְנָה־עֹרֶף מוֹאָב בּוֹשׁ
50,2	נִלְכְּדָה בָבֶל הֹבִישׁ בֵּל חַת מְרֹדָךְ
50,2 *MT*	[הֹבִישׁוּ עֲצַבֶּיהָ חַתּוּ גִלּוּלֶיהָ]

Sonst
2 Kön 19,26 וְיֹשְׁבֵיהֶן קְצַר־יָד חַתּוּ וַיֵּבֹשׁוּ // Jes 37,27
Jes 20,5 וְחַתּוּ וָבֹשׁוּ מִכּוּשׁ מַבָּטָם

בוש **לכד ,בוש**
8,9 הֹבִישׁוּ חֲכָמִים חַתּוּ וַיִּלָּכֵדוּ
48,1 כִּי שֻׁדְּדָה [הֹבִישָׁה] נִלְכְּדָה קִרְיָתַיִם הֹבִישָׁה הַמִּשְׂגָּב וָחָתָּה
50,2 נִלְכְּדָה בָבֶל הֹבִישׁ בֵּל חַת מְרֹדָךְ [הֹבִישׁוּ עֲצַבֶּיהָ חַתּוּ גִּלּוּלֶיהָ]
Alle drei Stellen enthalten auch das Verb חתת; vgl. die vorige Eintragung.

בַּחוּר ⇒ עוֹלָל עוֹלָל mit Präpositionalapposition von חוּץ

בכה **בכה ל „weinen über, beweinen“**
22,10 אַל־תִּבְכּוּ לְמֵת
22,10 בְּכוּ בָכוֹ לַהֹלֵךְ
48,32 מִבְּכִי יַעְזֵר אֶבְכֶּה־לָּךְ הַגֶּפֶן שִׂבְמָה
Sonst
Ijob 30,25 אִם־לֹא בָכִיתִי לְקֹשֵׁה־יוֹם
Vergleiche mit 48,32
Jes 16,9 עַל־כֵּן אֶבְכֶּה בִּבְכִי יַעְזֵר גֶּפֶן שִׂבְמָה
Die Jer-Parallele benutzt die buchtypische Konstruktion mit ל.
Sonst wird dieser Sachverhalt ausgedrückt mit direktem Objekt: Gen 23,2; 37,35; 50,3; Lev 10,6; Num 20,29; Dtn 21,13; 34,8; Jes 16,9; Jer 8,23; Ez 8,14 (D);[17] mit der Präposition עַל: Ri 11,37.38; 2 Sam 3,34; Jer 31,15 (D); Klgl 1,16;[18] bzw. אֶל 2 Sam 1,24; Ez 27,31.[19]

בַּעַל **נבא בַּבַּעַל**
2,8 וְהַנְּבִיאִים נִבְּאוּ בַבַּעַל
23,13 הִנָּבְּאוּ בַבַּעַל

בַּת **בַּת־עַמִּי**
4,11 רוּחַ צַח שְׂפָיִם בַּמִּדְבָּר דֶּרֶךְ בַּת־עַמִּי
6,26 בַּת־עַמִּי חְגְרִי־שָׂק וְהִתְפַּלְּשִׁי בָאֵפֶר
8,11 *MT* [וַיְרַפּוּ אֶת־שֶׁבֶר בַּת־עַמִּי עַל־נְקֵלָה]
8,19 הִנֵּה־קוֹל [שַׁוְעַת] בַּת־עַמִּי מֵאֶרֶץ מַרְחַקִּים
8,21 עַל־שֶׁבֶר בַּת־עַמִּי [הָשְׁבָּרְתִּי]
8,22 [כִּי] מַדּוּעַ לֹא עָלְתָה אֲרֻכַת בַּת־עַמִּי
8,23 וְאִבְכֶּה <הָעָם הַזֶּה> יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה אֵת חַלְלֵי בַת־עַמִּי
9,6 כִּי־[אֵיךְ] אֶעֱשֶׂה מִפְּנֵי <רָעַת> בַּת־עַמִּי
14,17 כִּי שֶׁבֶר [גָּדוֹל] נִשְׁבְּרָה [בְּתוּלַת] בַּת־עַמִּי

17 Vgl. 1 Sam 20,41.
18 Vgl. Gen 45,14; 50,1; Num 11,13; Ri 14,16.17; 2 Kön 13,14.
19 Vgl. 2 Sam 3,32.

Sonst Jes 22,4; Klgl 2,11; 3,48; 4,3.6.10; davon שֶׁבֶר בַּת־עַמִּי: Klgl 2,11; 3,48; 4,10.

גּוֹלָה	**Götter ziehen in die Verbannung**
48,7	וְיָצָא כְמוֹשׁ (כְּמוֹשׁQ) בַּגּוֹלָה כֹּהֲנָיו וְשָׂרָיו יַחַד (יַחְדָּיוQ) (*AIT* = Q)
49,3 *AIT*	כִּי מַלְכָּם \ מִלְכֹּם בַּגּוֹלָה יֵלֵךְ כֹּהֲנָיו וְשָׂרָיו יַחְדָּיו

גָּנַב	**מצא → גָּנַב**
2,26	כְּבֹשֶׁת גַּנָּב כִּי יִמָּצֵא
48,27	(נִמְצָאQ) אִם־בְּגַנָּבִים נִמְצָאָה
Sonst	
Ex 22,1	אִם־בַּמַּחְתֶּרֶת יִמָּצֵא הַגַּנָּב
Ex 22,6	אִם־יִמָּצֵא הַגַּנָּב
Ex 22,7	אִם־לֹא יִמָּצֵא הַגַּנָּב
Spr 6,30-31	לֹא־יָבוּזוּ לַגַּנָּב … (31) וְנִמְצָא (30)

נעשׁ	**עשׁ-Dt für das Tosen des Wassers**
5,22	אֲשֶׁר־שַׂמְתִּי חוֹל גְּבוּל לַיָּם חָק־עוֹלָם … וַיִּתְגָּעֲשׁוּ וְלֹא יוּכָלוּ וְהָמוּ גַלָּיו
46,7	מִי־זֶה כַּיְאֹר יַעֲלֶה <וּ>כַנְּהָרוֹת יִתְגָּעֲשׁוּ מֵימָ[יו]
46,8 *MT*	[וְכַנְּהָרוֹת יִתְגָּעֲשׁוּ מָיִם] <מִי> מִצְרַיִם כַּיְאֹר יַעֲלֶה

Sonst mit Subjekt הָאָרֶץ 2 Sam 22,8 // Ps 18,8; מוֹסְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם 2 Sam 22,8; מוֹסְדֵי הָרִים Ps 18,8; כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם Jer*MT* 25,16; vgl. Ijob 34,20 געשׁ-D pass mit Subjekt עַם.

דין	**דין דִּין**
5,28	דִּין לֹא־דָנוּ
22,16	אֶבְיוֹן דִּין־עָנִי וְ<דִּין> <לֹא> דָן<וּ>
30,13	אֵין־דָּן דִּינֵךְ

דִּמְעָה	**עָיִן, דִּמְעָה**
8,23	מִי־יִתֵּן רֹאשִׁי מַיִם וְעֵינִי מְקוֹר דִּמְעָה
9,17	וְתֵרַדְנָה עֵינֵינוּ דִּמְעָה
13,17	וְתֵרַד עֵינִי דִּמְעָה
14,17	תֵּרַדְנָה עֵינַי דִּמְעָה
31,16	מִנְעִי \ יְמָנַע קוֹלֵךְ מִבֶּכִי וְעֵינַיִךְ מִדִּמְעָה

Sonst Ps 6,7-8; 116,8; Klgl 2,11. Die Kollokation ist im CP exklusiv. Die Kollokation von דִּמְעָה, עָיִן und ירד (9,17; 13,17; 14,17) ist im AT einzigartig.

דֶּרֶךְ	⇒ עוֹלָם עוֹלָם, נְתִיבָה, דֶּרֶךְ

הָ	**Tripelfragen: הָ → אִם → מַדּוּעַ**
2,14	הַעֶבֶד יִשְׂרָאֵל אִם־יְלִיד בַּיִת הוּא מַדּוּעַ הָיָה לָבַז
2,31	הֲמִדְבָּר הָיִיתִי לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אִם אֶרֶץ מַאְפֵּלְיָה מַדּוּעַ אָמְרוּ עַמִּי
8,4-5	הֲיִפְּלוּ וְלֹא יָקוּמוּ אִם־יָשׁוּב וְלֹא יָשׁוּב: מַדּוּעַ שׁוֹבְבָה הָעָם הַזֶּה

8,19 הַיהוָה אֵין בְּצִיּוֹן אִם־מַלְכָּ[ה] אֵין בָּהּ מַדּוּעַ הִכְעִסוּנִי בִּפְסִלֵיהֶם בְּהַבְלֵי נֵכָר

8,22 הַצֳּרִי אֵין בְּגִלְעָד אִם־רֹפֵא אֵין שָׁם [כִּי] מַדּוּעַ לֹא עָלְתָה אֲרֻכַת בַּת־עַמִּי

14,19 הֲמָאֹס מָאַסְתָּ אֶת־יְהוּדָה אִם־בְּצִיּוֹן גָּעֲלָה נַפְשֶׁךָ מַדּוּעַ הִכִּיתָנוּ

22,28 *MT* [הַעֶצֶב] נִבְזֶה [נָפוּץ הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה] כֶּנְיָהוּ אִם־כְּלִי אֵין חֵפֶץ בּוֹ מַדּוּעַ הוּטַל[וּ הוּא וְזַרְעוֹ]

49,1 הֲבָנִים אֵין לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אִם־יוֹרֵשׁ אֵין לוֹ מַדּוּעַ יָרַשׁ מַלְכָּם \ מִלְכֹּם אֶת־גָּד

Auch die Abfolge הֲ → אִם → אֵין → אִין (Jer 8,19.22; 49,1) ist einzigartig im AT.

Vgl. lediglich Mi 4,9: הֲמֶלֶךְ אֵין־בָּךְ אִם־יוֹעֲצֵךְ אָבַד כִּי־הֶחֱזִיקֵךְ חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה (keine Fortsetzung mit מַדּוּעַ).

המה ⇒ לֵב לֵב mit Prädikat המה

זֶה **זה + Substantiv mit ePP der 2. Person: „Das ist dein …“**

13,25 זֶה גּוֹרָלֵךְ

22,21 זֶה דַּרְכֵּךְ מִנְּעוּרַיִךְ

Sonst

Gen 20,13 זֶה חַסְדֵּךְ אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשִׂי עִמָּדִי

Gen 43,29 הֲזֶה אֲחִיכֶם הַקָּטֹן

2 Sam 16,17 זֶה חַסְדֵּךְ אֶת־רֵעֶךָ

Neh 9,18 זֶה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלְךָ מִמִּצְרָיִם

Im CP ist die Ausdrucksweise exklusiv.

חגר **חגר Imperativ mit Objekt שַׂק**

4,8 עַל־זֹאת חִגְרוּ שַׂקִּים סִפְדוּ וְהֵילִילוּ

6,26 בַּת־עַמִּי חִגְרִי־שָׂק וְהִתְפַּלְשִׁי בָּאֵפֶר

49,3 הֵילִילִי חֶשְׁבּוֹן כִּי שֹׁדְדָה־עַי צְעַקְנָה בְנוֹת רַבָּה חֲגֹרְנָה שַׂקִּים סְפֹדְנָה

Sonst

2 Sam 3,31 קִרְעוּ בִגְדֵיכֶם וְחִגְרוּ שַׂקִּים וְסִפְדוּ

Die Kollokation mit Imperativen von ספד und ילל-H (4,8; 49,3) ist exklusiv (vgl. Joël 1,13).

חזק **חזק mit Subjekt „(äußerer Ausdruck der) Emotion“**

6,24 שָׁמַעְנוּ אֶת־שָׁמְעוֹ רָפוּ יָדֵינוּ צָרָה הֶחֱזִיקַתְנוּ חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה

8,21 שַׁמָּה הֶחֱזָקָתְנִי

49,24 רָפְתָה דַּמֶּשֶׂק הִפְנְתָה לָנוּס וְרֶטֶט הֶחֱזִיקָה

50,43 // שָׁמַע מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל אֶת־שִׁמְעָם וְרָפוּ יָדָיו צָרָה הֶחֱזִיקַתְהוּ חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה 6,24

Vergleiche

Mi 4,9 כִּי־הֶחֱזִיקֵךְ חִיל כַּיּוֹלֵדָה

Bei den Jer-Belegen geht immer ein lexikalisches Subjekt dem Prädikat voraus.

חֵמָה	חֵמָה mit Prädikat יצא
4,4	פֶּן־תֵּצֵא כָאֵשׁ חֲמָתִי וּבָעֲרָה וְאֵין מְכַבֶּה מִפְּנֵי רַע מַעַלְלֵיכֶם
21,12 *MT*	פֶּן־תֵּצֵא \ תֵּצֵת כָּאֵשׁ חֲמָתִי וּבָעֲרָה וְאֵין מְכַבֶּה
	[מִפְּנֵי רַע מַעַלְלֵיהֶם (מַעַלְלֵיכֶם^{Q})]
23,19	הִנֵּה סַעֲרַת יְהוָה חֵמָה יָצְאָה וְסַעַר מִתְחוֹלֵל
30,23	הִנֵּה \ כִּי סַעֲרַת יְהוָה <יָצְאָה> חֵמָה יָצְאָה סַעַר מִתְגּוֹרֵר

חֵמָה	אֵין מְכַבֶּה → חֵמָה
4,4	פֶּן־תֵּצֵא כָאֵשׁ חֲמָתִי וּבָעֲרָה וְאֵין מְכַבֶּה מִפְּנֵי רַע מַעַלְלֵיכֶם
21,12	פֶּן־תֵּצֵא \ תֵּצֵת כָּאֵשׁ חֲמָתִי וּבָעֲרָה וְאֵין מְכַבֶּה
	[מִפְּנֵי רַע מַעַלְלֵיהֶם (מַעַלְלֵיכֶם^{Q})]

Charakteristisch ist die gesamte Wendung פֶּן־… כָּאֵשׁ חֲמָתִי וּבָעֲרָה וְאֵין מְכַבֶּה

אֵין מְכַבֶּה sonst Jes 1,31; Am 5,6; חֵמָה mit Prädikat von בער I sonst Jer 44,6; Ps 89,47; Est 1,12.

חָמָס	חָמָס וָשֹׁד als Zeterruf
6,7	חָמָס וָשֹׁד יִשָּׁמַע בָּהּ
20,8	חָמָס וָשֹׁד אֶקְרָא

Vergleiche

Jes 60,18	לֹא־יִשָּׁמַע עוֹד חָמָס בְּאַרְצֵךְ שֹׁד וָשֶׁבֶר בִּגְבוּלָיִךְ
Jer 51,35 *AIT*	חֲמָסִי וּשְׁאֵרִי \ וְשֹׁדִי עַל־בָּבֶל
Ez 45,9	חָמָס וָשֹׁד הָסִירוּ
Am 3,10	הָאוֹצְרִים חָמָס וָשֹׁד בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֵיהֶם
Hab 1,3	וְשֹׁד וְחָמָס לְנֶגְדִּי
Hab 2,17	כִּי חֲמַס לְבָנוֹן יְכַסֶּךָּ וְשֹׁד בְּהֵמוֹת יְחִיתַן

Charakteristisch ist das Wortpaar חָמָס וָשֹׁד, das von einem geeigneten Verb als zitierter Zeterruf kenntlich gemacht wird. Das geschieht sonst nur in Jes 60,18, aber dort ist die Kontaktstellung des Wortpaars aufgehoben.

חֶרֶב	חֶרֶב ל „X hat ein Schwert, Schwert des X“
6,25	כִּי חֶרֶב לְאוֹיֵב
12,12	כִּי חֶרֶב לַיהוָה אֹכְלָה
47,6	[הוֹי] חֶרֶב לַיהוָה

Sonst

Ri 7,20	וַיִּקְרְאוּ חֶרֶב לַיהוָה וּלְגִדְעוֹן
Jes 34,6	חֶרֶב לַיהוָה מָלְאָה דָם

חרה	חרה-t
12,5	וְאֵיךְ תִּתַּחֲרֶה אֶת־הַסּוּסִים
22,15	הֲתִמְלֹךְ כִּי אַתָּה מִתַּחֲרֶה °בָּאָרֶז°

חֶרְפָּה	דְּבַר־יְהוָה הָיָה לְחֶרְפָּה
6,10	הִנֵּה דְבַר־יְהוָה הָיָה לָהֶם לְחֶרְפָּה
20,8	כִּי־הָיָה דְבַר־יְהוָה לִי לְחֶרְפָּה וּלְקֶלֶס כָּל־הַיּוֹם

חשׁב	כרת → חשׁב
11,19	[כִּי]־עָלַי חָשְׁבוּ מַחֲשָׁבוֹת <רָעוֹת לֵאמֹר לְכוּ> °נַשְׁחִיתָה° עֵץ בְּלַחְמוֹ וְנִכְרְתֶנּוּ מֵאֶרֶץ חַיִּים
48,2	בְּחֶשְׁבּוֹן חָשְׁבוּ עָלֶיהָ רָעָה [לְכוּ וְ]נַכְרִיתֶנָּה מִגּוֹי

Dies sind zugleich die einzigen Formen von כרת PK 1. Pl mit Suffixen.

יָד	Konstruktusverbindung רעע √ + יַד
15,21	כִּי־אִתְּךָ אֲנִי לְהוֹשִׁיעֲךָ וּלְהַצִּילֶךָ נְאֻם־יְהוָה: וְהִצַּלְתִּיךָ מִיַּד רָעִים
20,13	כִּי הִצִּיל אֶת־נֶפֶשׁ אֶבְיוֹן מִיַּד מְרֵעִים
23,14	וְחִזְקוּ יְדֵי מְרֵעִים

Sonst

Ez 30,12 *MT* [וּמָכַרְתִּי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ בְּיַד־רָעִים]

Ijob 8,20 וְלֹא־יַחֲזִיק בְּיַד־מְרֵעִים

Abgesehen von dem masoretischen Überhang in Ez 30,12, ist die Verbindung im CP exklusiv. Die Verbindung von נצל mit מִיַּד + √ רעע (Jer 15,21; 20,13) ist auf Jer beschränkt (vgl. Hab 2,9 לְהִנָּצֵל מִכַּף־רָע).

ידע	Koordination von ידע-G Imperativ und ראה-G Imperativ
2,19	וּדְעִי וּרְאִי כִּי־[רַע וָ]מָר עָזְבֵךְ אֶת<י נְאֻם> יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיִךְ
2,23	רְאִי דַרְכֵּךְ בַּגַּיְא דְּעִי מֶה עָשִׂית
5,1	שׁוֹטְטוּ בְּחוּצוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם וּרְאוּ־[נָא] וּדְעוּ וּבַקְּשׁוּ בִרְחֹבוֹתֶיהָ

Sonst 1 Sam 12,17; 14,38; 20,7; 23,22.23; 24,12; 25,17; 2 Sam 24,13; 1 Kön 20,7.22; 2 Kön 5,7; Ps 139,23-24. 11 Belege aus 15 entfallen auf die Bücher Sam und Kön; im CP ist die Verbindung exklusiv.

ידע	אַתָּה יְהוָה יָדַעְתָּ
12,3	וְאַתָּה יְהוָה יְדַעְתָּנִי
15,15 *MT*	יְהוָה [אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ]
18,23	וְאַתָּה יְהוָה יָדַעְתָּ אֶת־כָּל־עֲצָתָם עָלַי לַמָּוֶת

Vergleiche

Ez 37,3	יְהוִה אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ [אֲדֹנָי]
Ps 40,10	יְהוָה אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ
Ps 69,6	אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ (lies: יְהוִה) אֱלֹהִים

Die Worte אַתָּה יָדָעְתָּ werden sonst an Jhwh gerichtet in 2 Sam 7,20; 1 Kön 8,39; Ps 69,20; 139,2; 142,4.

יַחְדָּו	Nomen (Plural) + ו + Nomen (Plural) + יַחְדָּו
6,12	וְנָסַבּוּ בָתֵּיהֶם לַאֲחֵרִים שָׂדוֹת וְנָשִׁים יַחְדָּו
6,21	וְכָשְׁלוּ בָם אָבוֹת וּבָנִים יַחְדָּו
13,14	וְנִפַּצְתִּים אִישׁ אֶל־אָחִיו וְהָאָבוֹת וְהַבָּנִים יַחְדָּו

31,13 *MT* אָז תִּשְׂמַח בְּתוּלָה בְּמָחוֹל וּבַחֻרִים וְזְקֵנִים יַחְדָּו \ יַחְדּוּ
48,7 וְיָצָא כְּמוֹשׁ (כְּמוֹשׁ^{Q}) בַּגּוֹלָה כֹּהֲנָיו וְשָׂרָיו יַחַד (יַחְדָּיו^{Q})
49,3 כִּי מַלְכָּם \ מִלְכֹּם בַּגּוֹלָה יֵלֵךְ כֹּהֲנָיו וְשָׂרָיו יַחְדָּיו

Mit Konstruktusverbindungen:

50,4 בָּאוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵמָּה וּבְנֵי־יְהוּדָה יַחְדָּו
50,33 עֲשׁוּקִים בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְנֵי־יְהוּדָה יַחְדָּו
Jes 1,28 וְשֶׁבֶר פֹּשְׁעִים וְחַטָּאִים יַחְדָּו
Jes 66,7 עַוֹנֹתֵיכֶם וַעֲוֹנֹת אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם יַחְדָּו
Hos 2,2 וְנִקְבְּצוּ בְּנֵי־יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל יַחְדָּו

Mit einem singularischen und einem pluralischen Glied: Dtn 22,11; Jer 31,24; Am 1,15; vgl. 1 Chr 10,6. Mit zwei oder mehr singularischen Gliedern: Dtn 12,22; 15,22; 22,10; Jes 11,6; 41,19 // 60,13; Jer 31,8; vgl. Klgl 2,8; Spr 27,17 (vgl. BHS). Mit komplexerer Konstruktion: Jer 6,11. Mit zwei Substantiven und ohne Konstruktusverbindung ist die Konstruktion auf Jer beschränkt.

יכל **וַתּוּכָל**

3,5 הִנֵּה דִבַּרְתִּי (דִּבַּרְתְּ^{Q}) וַתַּעֲשִׂי הָרָעוֹת <הָאֵלֶּה> וַתּוּכָל
20,7 פִּתִּיתַנִי יְהוָה וָאֶפָּת חֲזַקְתַּ[נִי] וַתּוּכָל

Sonst

Gen 32,29 כִּי־שָׂרִיתָ עִם־אֱלֹהִים וְעִם־אֲנָשִׁים וַתּוּכָל

Der Narrativ 2. Ps ist 3 Mal belegt, und zwar immer im Sg m, davon 2 Mal in Jer.

יצא **יצא הַשָּׂדֶה**

6,25 הַשָּׂדֶה (*AlT* = תֵּצְאִי^{Q}) אַל־תֵּצְאִי
14,18 אִם־יָצָאתִי הַשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה חַלְלֵי־חָרֶב

Sonst Gen 27,3; Ri 9,27.42; 1 Sam 20,11.11.35; 2 Sam 11,23; 18,6; 2 Kön 4,39; Hld 7,12; vgl. Gen 24,63; Dtn 14,22; 2 Kön 7,12. Die Verbindung ist nicht selten, aber im CP exklusiv.

יצב **יצב-Dt Imperativ**

46,4 וְהִתְיַצְּבוּ בְּכוֹבָעִים
46,14 הִתְיַצֵּב וְהָכֵן [לָךְ]

Imperative von **יצב**-Dt sind nicht selten (Ex 8,16; 9,13; 14,13; Num 23,3.15; Dtn 31,14; 1 Sam 10,19; 12,7.16; 2 Sam 18,30; Ijob 33,5; 2 Chr 20,17), aber ohne Parallele im CP, wo nur zwei weitere Belege von **יצב**-Dt auftreten (Hab 2,1; Sach 6,5).

יצת **יצת מִבְּלִי**

2,15 מִבְּלִי יֹשֵׁב (נִצַּתְתָּ^{Q}) עָרָיו נִצָּתָה
9,9 כִּי נִצְּתוּ מִבְּלִי־אִישׁ [עֹבֵר]

Bereits die Abfolge **יצת** מִן ist ohne Gegenbeispiel.

יַרְכָתֵי־אֶרֶץ	יַרְכְּתֵי־אֶרֶץ
6,22	הִנֵּה עַם בָּא מֵ[אֶרֶץ] צָפוֹן וְגוֹי [גָּדוֹל] יֵעוֹר מִיַּרְכְּתֵי־אָרֶץ
25,32	הִנֵּה רָעָה יֹצֵאת מִגּוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי וְסַעַר גָּדוֹל יֵעוֹר מִיַּרְכְּתֵי־אָרֶץ
31,8	וְקִבַּצְתִּים מִיַּרְכְּתֵי־אָרֶץ
50,41	הִנֵּה עַם בָּא מִצָּפוֹן וְגוֹי גָּדוֹל וּמְלָכִים רַבִּים יֵעֹרוּ מִיַּרְכְּתֵי־אָרֶץ

Eine Variante der Wendung mit Artikel oder einer anderen Präposition existiert nicht. Auch die Verbindung mit עור-N ist charakteristisch.

ישב	**Negation (+ היה) + Partizip von ישב + ב + enklitisches Personalpronomen**
4,29	וְאֵין־יוֹשֵׁב בָּהֶן אִישׁ
48,9	וּ<כל> עָרֶיהָ לְשַׁמָּה תִּהְיֶינָה °מֵאֵין° יוֹשֵׁב בָּהֶן
50,3	וְלֹא־יִהְיֶה יוֹשֵׁב בָּהּ

ישב	**Partizip von ישב im Status constructus + ב + enklitisches Personalpronomen**
8,16	וַיֹּאכְלוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ עִיר וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
12,4	מֵרָעַת יֹשְׁבֵי־בָהּ סָפְתָה בְהֵמוֹת וָעוֹף
46,8	אַבִּידָה [עִיר וְ]יֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
47,2	וְיִשְׁטְפוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ עִיר וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
Sonst	
Jes 24,6	וַיֶּאְשְׁמוּ יֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
Ps 24,1	לַיהוָה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
Ps 98,7	יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמְלֹאוֹ תֵּבֵל וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ
Ps 107,34	אֶרֶץ פְּרִי לִמְלֵחָה מֵרָעַת יֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ

Alle anderen Belege verwenden die Variante כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ: Ez 32,15; Hos 4,3; Am 8,8; 9,5; Nah 1,5; Hab 2,8.17. Innerhalb des CP ist der Sprachgebrauch von Jer distinktiv.

כֹּהֵן	⇒ נָבִיא	גַּם־נָבִיא גַּם־כֹּהֵן

כִּי	כִּי גַם
6,11	כִּי־גַם־אִישׁ עִם־אִשָּׁה יִלָּכְדוּ זָקֵן עִם־מָלֵא יָמִים
12,6	כִּי גַם־אַחֶיךָ וּבֵית־אָבִיךָ גַּם־הֵמָּה בָּגְדוּ בָךְ
14,5 *MT*	[כִּי] גַּם־אַיֶּלֶת בַּשָּׂדֶה יָלְדָה וְעָזוֹב
14,18	כִּי־§ גַּם־נָבִיא * גַּם־כֹּהֵן # סָחֲרוּ אֶל־אֶרֶץ
23,11	כִּי־§ גַּם־נָבִיא * גַּם־כֹּהֵן # חָנֵפוּ
46,21	כִּי־גַם־הֵמָּה הִפְנוּ נָסוּ יַחְדָּיו
48,34	כִּי גַּם־מֵי נִמְרִים לְמִשַּׁמּוֹת יִהְיוּ
51,12 *MT*	כִּי [גַּם]־זָמַם § יְהוָה * גַּם־עָשָׂה #

Dies ist eine von Jeremia und Kohelet bevorzugte Satzeröffnung. In Jer begegnen 6 gesicherte (*MT*: 8) Fälle von 22. Aus den übrigen 14 Belegen entfallen 6 auf Koh (4,14.16; 7,22; 8,12.16; 9,12). Der Rest ist breit ge-

streut: Gen 35,17; Dtn 12,31 (Text?); 1 Sam 21,9; 22,17 (Text?); 2 Sam 4,2; Jes 26,12; Ez 18,11; Hos 9,12.

כל	**כל mit enklitischem Personalpronomen der 3. Ps Sg + Partizip**
6,13a	כִּי מִקְטַנָּם וְעַד־גְּדוֹלָם כֻּלּוֹ בוֹצֵעַ בָּצַע // [8,10b]
6,13b	וּמִנָּבִיא וְעַד־כֹּהֵן כֻּלּוֹ עֹשֶׂה שָׁקֶר // [8,10c]
8,6 *TT*	כֻּלֹּה \ כָּלָה שָׁב בְּמֶרְצוֹתָם
8,10b *MT*	[כִּי מִקָּטֹן וְעַד־גָּדוֹל כֻּלֹּה בֹּצֵעַ בָּצַע] // 6,13a
8,10c *MT*	[מִנָּבִיא וְעַד־כֹּהֵן כֻּלֹּה עֹשֶׂה שָׁקֶר] // 6,13b
15,10 *MT*	כֻּלֹּה מְקַלְלַנִי \ <כִּי> כָּלָה בְמִקְלָלִי # §
20,7 *TT*	[לִי] לְעֵג (διετέλεσα √ כלה) כֻּלֹּה

8,6 שָׁב wird von *G** (ὁ τρέχων) und *S* (*mhlkyn*) als Partizip interpretiert. Die verderbte und offenbar durch Zusatz von כִּי־חִי nachgebesserte alexandrinische Lesart von 15,10 spiegelt sowohl die Schreibung כלה als auch eine partizipiale Form von קלל-D.

Sonst

Jes 1,23	כֻּלּוֹ אֹהֵב שֹׁחַד וְרֹדֵף שַׁלְמֹנִים
Ps 29,9	כֻּלּוֹ אֹמֵר כָּבוֹד

Die Konstellation („ein jeder …“) ist nur mit maskulinen Personalpronomina bezeugt. Nach Abzug des Duplikats von 6,13-14 in 8,10b-12 stehen 5 Fälle in Jer 2 Belegen im Rest des AT gegenüber. Konstruktionen mit pluralischen Personalpronomina der 3. Ps bieten Jer 6,28; 9,1; Ez 7,16; 38,11; Hos 7,4; Hld 4,2 // 6,6; Neh 6,9.

כרת ⇒ חשׁב כרת → חשׁב

לא	**לֹא־כֵן**
8,6	לוֹא־כֵן יֵדַבֵּרוּ
23,10	וַתְּהִי מְרוּצָתָם רָעָה וּגְבוּרָתָם לֹא־כֵן
48,30b *MT*	וְלֹא־ \ הֵלֹּא [כֵן] בַּדָּיו \ דַּיּוֹ
48,30c	לֹא־כֵן עָשׂוּ

Der Beleg in 48,30b ist textlich ungesichert. Ohne ihn entfallen 3 Belege aus 7 auf Jer.

Sonst 2 Kön 7,9; 17,9; Ijob 9,35; Spr 15,7. Der Ausdruck ist distinktiv im CP.

לא	**Nomen + Apposition, erweitert um לֹא + Passiv (Ptz Pass; N, D pass, H pass, tD pass)**
2,2 *MT*	לֶכְתֵּךְ אַחֲרַי [בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ] לֹא זְרוּעָה
6,8	פֶּן־אֲשִׁימֵךְ שְׁמָמָה אֶרֶץ לוֹא נוֹשָׁבָה
15,18 *MT*	הָיוֹ תִהְיֶה לִי כְּמוֹ \ כְּמֵי אַכְזָב [מַיִם] לֹא נֶאֱמָנוּ
18,15	לָלֶכֶת נְתִיבוֹת דֶּרֶךְ לֹא סְלוּלָה
22,6	אִם־לֹא אֲשִׁיתֵךְ מִדְבָּר עָרִים לֹא נוֹשָׁבָה (נושבוּ֫)

Der masoretische Überschuss in 2,2 ist aus metrischen Gründen unverzichtbar; hier muss daher ein Textausfall in *AlT* vorliegen. Ebenso dürfte in 15,18 *AlT* מַיִם entfallen sein, nachdem כְּמוֹ in כְּמֵי verschrieben worden war.

לאה	**לאה mit Infinitiv von כול**
6,11	נִלְאֵיתִי הָכִיל
20,9	וְנִלְאֵיתִי כַּלְכֵּל

לאה	**לאה mit Infinitiv ohne ל**
6,11	נִלְאֵיתִי הָכִיל
9,4 *MT*	הַעֲוֵה \ הֵעָווּ נִלְאוּ
15,6	נִלְאֵיתִי הִנָּחֵם
20,9	וְנִלְאֵיתִי כַּלְכֵּל
Sonst	
Jes 1,14	נִלְאֵיתִי נְשֹׂא

Vgl. mit ל + Infinitiv: Gen 19,11; Ex 7,18; Spr 26,15.

לֵב	**לֵב mit Prädikat המה**
4,19	הֹמָה־לִי לִבִּי
48,36	עַל־כֵּן לִבִּי לְמוֹאָב כַּחֲלִלִים יֶהֱמֶה
48,36	וְלִבִּי אֶל־אַנְשֵׁי קִיר־חֶרֶשׂ כַּחֲלִילִים יֶהֱמֶה

Belege mit לֵבָב fehlen.

Vgl. zu 48,36 die Parallele Jes 16,11 עַל־כֵּן מֵעַי לְמוֹאָב כַּכִּנּוֹר יֶהֱמוּ וְקִרְבִּי לְקִיר חָרֶשׂ

מָגוֹר	**מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב**
6,25	אַל־תֵּצְאוּ֙ הַשָּׂדֶה וּבַדֶּרֶךְ אַל־תֵּלֵכוּ֙ כִּי חֶרֶב לְאוֹיֵב מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב
20,3 *MT*	[מִסָּבִיב] לֹא פַשְׁחוּר קָרָא יְהוָה שִׁמְךָ כִּי אִם־מָגוֹר
20,10	כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי דִּבַּת רַבִּים מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב
46,5	וְגִבּוֹרֵיהֶם יֻכַּתּוּ וּמָנוֹס נָסוּ וְלֹא הִפְנוּ מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב
49,29	וְקָרְאוּ עֲלֵיהֶם מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב
Sonst	
Ps 31,14	כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי דִּבַּת רַבִּים מָגוֹר מִסָּבִיב

מְדֵי	**מְדֵי → דבר-D**
20,8 *MT*	כִּי־°מְדֵי אֲדַבֵּר אֶזְעָק°
31,20	כִּי־מְדֵי דַבְּרִי בּוֹ זָכֹר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד
Vergleiche	
48,27	כִּי־[מְדֵי דִבָּרֵיךְ] בּוֹ תִתְנוֹדָד (vgl. BHS)

מְדֵי ist 15 Mal belegt. In 20,8 *AlT* ist der markierte Passus zu מְרֵי דְבָרַי אֶצְחָק verschrieben.

מְחִתָּה **היה לְמְחִתָּה**
17,17 אַל־תִּהְיֶה־לִּי לְמְחִתָּה
48,39 וְהָיָה מוֹאָב לְשָׂחק וְלִמְחִתָּה לְכָל־סְבִיבָיו

Schon die Verbindung לְמְחִתָּה ist im AT auf Jer beschränkt. Vergleiche מְחִתָּה ל Spr 10,29 // 21,15; 13,3; 18,7 (jeweils ohne היה). מְחִתָּה ist 11 Mal bezeugt; neben den genannten Belegen noch Jes 54,14; Ps 89,41; Spr 10,14.15; 14,28.

⇒ שְׂחק היה לְשָׂחק

מַכָּה **מַכָּה נַחְלָה**
10,19 אוֹי [לִי] עַל־שִׁבְרִי נַחְלָה מַכָּתִי
14,17 כִּי שֶׁבֶר [גָּדוֹל] נִשְׁבְּרָה [בְּתוּלַת] בַּת־עַמִּי מַכָּה נַחְלָה מְאֹד
30,12 אָנוּשׁ [לְ]שִׁבְרֵ[ךְ] נַחְלָה מַכָּתֵךְ

Sonst
Nah 3,19 אֵין־כֵּהָה לְשִׁבְרֶךָ נַחְלָה מַכָּתֶךָ כֹּל שֹׁמְעֵי שִׁמְעֲךָ תָּקְעוּ כַף עָלֶיךָ

מלא **Füllung von belebten Größen mit Emotionen**
6,11 וְאֵת § חֲמַת יְהוָה \ חֲמָתִי # מָלֵאתִי
15,17 כִּי־זַעַם מִלֵּאתָנִי \ מָלֵאתִי

Sonst
Est 3,5 וַיִּמָּלֵא הָמָן חֵמָה
Est 5,9 וַיִּמָּלֵא הָמָן עַל־מָרְדֳּכַי חֵמָה

Vergleiche
Jes 30,27 שְׂפָתָיו מָלְאוּ זַעַם

Füllung von belebten Größen mit דִּין Ijob 36,17; חָכְמָה Ex 35,35; 1 Kön 7,14; כֹּחַ Mi 3,8; מַלִּים Ijob 32,18; רוּחַ Ex 28,3; 31,3; 35,31; Mi 3,8; רַע Spr 21,12; vgl. die Füllung des Herzens (לֵב) Koh 8,11; Est 7,5.

מלא **קרא, √ מלא „aus voller (Kehle) rufen“**
4,5 קְרָאוּ מָלְאוּ
12,6 גַּם־הֵמָּה קָרְאוּ אַחֲרֵיךְ מָלֵא

Das Idiom wird in 4,5 mit dem Verb מלא und in 12,6 mit dem Adjektiv מָלֵא gebildet.

מנע **מנע + Objekt 1 + Präpositionalverbindung mit מִן + Objekt 2 + Präpositionalverbindung mit מִן**
2,25 מִנְעִי רַגְלֵךְ מִיָּחֵף וּגוֹרֹנֵךְ (*AIT* = Q וּגְרוֹנֵךְ) מִצִּמְאָה
31,16 מִנְעִי \ יִמָּנַע קוֹלֵךְ מִבֶּכִי וְעֵינַיִךְ מִדִּמְעָה

Die beiden Passagen sind nach Struktur und Satzstellung identisch; in *MT* stimmt darüber hinaus der Imperativ מִנְעִי überein. Der Imperativ von מנע begegnet sonst nur in Spr 1,15 (maskulin).

מְצָהָלָה
8,6 *AIT* כְּסוּס שׁוֹטֵף בַּמִּלְחָמָה \ בְּמִצְהָלָה
8,16 מִקּוֹל מִצְהֲלוֹת אַבִּירָיו רָעֲשָׁה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ

13,27 נְאֻפֶ֙יךָ֙ וּמְצַהֲלוֹתָ֔יִךְ זִמַּ֥ת זְנוּתֵ֖ךְ

I מְרוּצָה
8,6 כֻּלֹּ֥ה שָׁ֖ב בְּמִרְצוֹתָ֑ם (בְּמִרוּצָתָם֙Q) כְּסוּס֙ שׁוֹטֵ֣ף בַּמִּלְחָמָ֔ה
23,10 וַתְּהִי֙ מִרוּצָתָ֣ם רָעָ֔ה וּגְבוּרָתָ֖ם לֹא־כֵֽן
Sonst 2 Sam 18,27.27.

נָבִיא גַּם־נָבִיא גַּם־כֹּהֵן
14,18 כִּי־§ גַם־נָבִיא * גַּם־כֹּהֵן # סָחֲרוּ֙ אֶל־אֶ֣רֶץ
23,11 כִּי־§ גַם־נָבִיא * גַּם־כֹּהֵן # חָנְפ֥וּ
Belege in umgekehrter Reihenfolge fehlen in *MT*, ebenso solche mit וְגַם vor dem zweiten Glied.

נגד נגד-H Imperativ → שׁמע-H Imperativ → אמר Imperativ
4,5 הַגִּ֤ידוּ בִיהוּדָה֙ [ו]בִירוּשָׁלַ֣ם * <ו>הַשְׁמִיעוּ֙ וְאִמְר֔וּ
46,14 הַגִּ֤ידוּ [בְמִצְרַ֙יִם֙ וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ֙] בְּמִגְדּ֔וֹל וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ֙ בְּנֹ֔ף [וּבְתַחְפַּנְחֵ֖ס] אִמְר֑וּ
50,2 הַגִּ֤ידוּ בַגּוֹיִם֙ וְהַשְׁמִיעוּ֙ [וְשָׂא֣וּ־נֵ֔ס הַשְׁמִ֖יעוּ] אַל־תְּכַחֵ֑דוּ אִמְר֗וּ
Sonst
Jes 48,20 הַגִּ֤ידוּ הַשְׁמִיעוּ֙ זֹ֣את הוֹצִיא֔וּהָ עַד־קְצֵ֥ה הָאָ֖רֶץ אִמְר֑וּ
Vergleiche
31,10 שִׁמְע֤וּ דְבַר־יְהוָה֙ גּוֹיִ֔ם וְהַגִּ֖ידוּ בָּאִיִּ֣ים מִמֶּ֑רְחָק וְאִמְר֗וּ

נָהִי ⟹ קוֹל קוֹל, נְהִי, שׁמע

נוס פנה, נוס (Abstand ≤ 2 Worte)
46,5 וּמָנ֥וֹס נָס֖וּ וְלֹ֣א הִפְנ֑וּ
46,21 כִּי־גַם־הֵ֣מָּה הִפְנ֔וּ נָס֥וּ יַחְדָּ֖יו
49,8 נֻ֣סוּ הָפְנ֔וּ
49,24 רָפְתָ֣ה דַמֶּ֔שֶׂק הִפְנְתָ֖ה לָנ֑וּס
Sonst
Ri 20,45.47 וַיִּפְנ֣וּ וַיָּנֻ֗סוּ הַמִּדְבָּ֙רָה֙ אֶל־סֶ֣לַע הָרִמּ֔וֹן
Vergleiche
Jer 50,16 אִ֚ישׁ אֶל־עַמּ֣וֹ יִפְנ֔וּ וְאִ֖ישׁ לְאַרְצ֣וֹ יָנֻֽסוּ // Jes 13,14
Jes 13,14 אִ֚ישׁ אֶל־עַמּ֣וֹ יִפְנ֔וּ וְאִ֖ישׁ אֶל־אַרְצ֣וֹ יָנ֑וּסוּ // Jer 50,16
Nah 2,9 וְהֵ֣מָּה נָסִ֔ים עִמְד֖וּ עֲמֹ֑דוּ וְאֵ֥ין מַפְנֶֽה

נטה נטה-H mit Objekt יָד
6,12 כִּי־אַתָּ֥ה אֶת־יָדִ֖י עַל־יוֹשְׁבֵ֥י הָאָֽרֶץ
15,6 וָאַ֥ט אֶת־יָדִ֖י [עָלַ֑יִךְ]
Sonst
Jes 31,3 וַיהוָ֥ה יַטֶּ֖ה יָד֑וֹ
Die Jer-Belege stehen im Unterschied zur Jes 31,3 in Gottesrede.

נְטִישׁוֹת
5,10 הָסִ֖ירוּ נְטִישׁוֹתֶ֑יהָ
48,32 נְטִישֹׁתַ֙יִךְ֙ עָבְר֣וּ יָ֔ם

Sonst
Jes 18,5 וְאֶת־הַנְּטִישׁוֹת הֵסִיר הֵתַז
Das Substantiv ist nur im Plural belegt.

נצה II
4,7 עָרַיִךְ \ עָרִים תִּצֶּינָה מֵאֵין יוֹשֵׁב
9,11 עַל־מָה אָבְדָה הָאָרֶץ נִצְּתָה כַמִּדְבָּר מִבְּלִי עֹבֵר
46,19 וְנִצְּתָה מֵאֵין יוֹשֵׁב<י בָהּ>
cj 48,9 תְּנוּ־צִיּוֹן \ צִיּוֹן לְמוֹאָב כִּי נָצוֹא תֵּצֵא (cj נָצוֹה תֵּצֶה)
Sonst
2 Kön 19,25 וּתְהִי לַהֲשׁוֹת גַּלִּים נִצִּים עָרִים בְּצֻרוֹת // Jes 37,26
Charakteristisch ist ferner die Fortführung durch מֵאֵין \ מִבְּלִי + Partizip.

נְתִיבָה ⇒ עוֹלָם עוֹלָם, נְתִיבָה, דֶּרֶךְ

סָכָל
4,22 בָּנִים סְכָלִים הֵמָּה
5,21 שִׁמְעוּ־נָא זֹאת עַם סָכָל וְאֵין לֵב
Sonst Koh 2,19; 7,17; 10,3.3.14.

עוֹלָל **עוֹלָל mit Präpositionalapposition von חוּץ**
6,11 <אֶ>שְׁפֹּךְ עַל־עוֹלָל בַּחוּץ וְעַל סוֹד בַּחוּרִים יַחְדָּו
9,20 לְהַכְרִית עוֹלָל מִחוּץ בַּחוּרִים מֵרְחֹבוֹת
Auch die Koordination mit בַּחוּר ist charakteristisch (sonst nur 2 Kön 8,12).

עוֹלָם **עוֹלָם, נְתִיבָה, דֶּרֶךְ**
6,16 עִמְדוּ עַל־דְּרָכִים וּרְאוּ וְשַׁאֲלוּ לִנְתִיבוֹת עוֹלָם
18,15 וַיִּכְשְׁלוּם \ וְיִכָּשְׁלוּ בְּדַרְכֵיהֶם שְׁבִילֵי \ חַבְלֵי עוֹלָם לָלֶכֶת נְתִיבוֹת

עִיר **עִיר** + Verb + יוֹשֵׁב + מֵאֵין \ מִבְּלִי
2,15 מִבְּלִי יֹשֵׁב (κατεσκάφησαν = נִתְּצוּ ? 𝔊נִצְּתָה) עָרָיו נִצְּתָה
4,7 עָרַיִךְ \ עָרִים תִּצֶּינָה מֵאֵין יוֹשֵׁב
⇒ אֶרֶץ אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ עִיר וְיֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ

עמד **עמד (Aufforderung) mit Ortsangabe דֶּרֶךְ**
6,16 עִמְדוּ עַל־דְּרָכִים וּרְאוּ וְשַׁאֲלוּ לִנְתִיבוֹת עוֹלָם
48,19 אֶל־דֶּרֶךְ עִמְדִי וְצַפִּי יוֹשֶׁבֶת עֲרוֹעֵר שַׁאֲלִי־נָס וְנִמְלָטָ[ה]
Mit darstellender Funktion von עמד: 2 Sam 15,2; 1 Kön 20,38; Ez 21,26; Ps 1,1.
⇒ שׁאל שׁאל Imperativ: Rhetorische Aufforderung zur Selbstvergewisserung

עמק **עמק לָשֶׁבֶת-H**
49,8 הֶעְמִיקוּ לָשֶׁבֶת יֹשְׁבֵי דְדָן

49,30 הֶעְמִיקוּ לָשֶׁבֶת יֹשְׁבֵי °חָצוֹר°

פוץ **רוּחַ ,פוץ**
13,24 וַאֲפִיצֵם כְּקַשׁ־עוֹבֵר לְרוּחַ מִדְבָּר
18,17 כְּרוּחַ־קָדִים אֲפִיצֵם לִפְנֵי אוֹיֵב
Vergleiche
Jes 41,16 תְּזָרֵם וְרוּחַ תִּשָּׂאֵם וּסְעָרָה תָּפִיץ אוֹתָם
Die Jer-Belege werden durch mehrere Spezifika abgehoben: Die identischen Prädikate אֲפִיצֵם unterstehen dem Subjekt Jhwh (ebenso bei der einzigen gleich lautenden Verbalform Gen 49,7), und sie vereinigen die Lexeme פוץ und רוּחַ im selben Satz.

פנה ⇒ נוס נוס ,פנה (Abstand ≤ 2 Worte)

פְּקֻדָּה **עֵת \ שְׁנַת פְּקֻדָּה „die Zeit / das Jahr der Heimsuchung“**
עֵת פְּקֻדָּה
6,15 *AlT* בְּעֵת־פְּקֻדָּתִים \ פְּקֻדָּה יִכָּשְׁלוּ // [8,12]
8,12 *MT* [לָכֵן יִפְּלוּ בַּנֹּפְלִים בְּעֵת פְּקֻדָּתָם יִכָּשְׁלוּ] // 6,15
10,15 יֹאבֵדוּ (4Q70 פקדתים) בְּעֵת פְּקֻדָּתָם // 51,18
46,21 כִּי יוֹם אֵידָ[ם] בָּא עֲלֵיהֶם עֵת פְּקֻדָּתָם
50,27 כִּי־בָא יוֹמָם עֵת פְּקֻדָּתָם
50,31 *AlT* כִּי בָא יוֹמֵךְ עֵת פְּקֻדָּתִיךְ \ פְּקֻדָּתֵךְ
51,18 בְּעֵת פְּקֻדָּתָם יֹאבֵדוּ // 10,15
Vgl. mit פקד:
6,15 *MT* בְּעֵת־פְּקֻדָּתִים \ פְּקֻדָּה יִכָּשְׁלוּ // [8,12]
49,8 כִּי אֵיד °עֵשָׂו° הֵבֵאתִי עָלָיו עֵת פְּקַדְתִּיו
50,31 *MT* כִּי בָא יוֹמֵךְ עֵת פְּקֻדָּתִיךְ \ פְּקֻדָּתֵךְ
Die Wendung ist ausschließlich in Jer bezeugt, und zwar gleichgültig ob עֵת von פְּקֻדָּה oder einer Form von פקד gefolgt wird. Eine unterscheidbare Untergruppe bilden die Belege in Jer 50,27.31, wo die Wendung eine Apposition in Kontaktstellung zum Subjekt eines Kausalsatzes der Form כִּי + בָּא + יוֹם mit enklitischem Personalpronomen bildet, anscheinend in Nachahmung von 46,21. 51,18 ist eine Kopie von 10,15.

שְׁנַת פְּקֻדָּה
11,23 כִּי־אָבִיא רָעָה אֶל־אַנְשֵׁי \ יֹשְׁבֵי עֲנָתוֹת שְׁנַת פְּקֻדָּתָם
23,12 כִּי־אָבִיא עֲלֵיהֶם רָעָה שְׁנַת פְּקֻדָּתָם
48,44 כִּי־אָבִיא אֵלֶיהָ \ אֶלֹה אֶל־מוֹאָב שְׁנַת פְּקֻדָּתָם
Vgl. יוֹם פְּקֻדִּי Ex 32,34; Jer [27,22]; Am 3,14; יוֹם פְּקֻדָּה Jes 10,3; יְמֵי הַפְּקֻדָּה Hos 9,7.
Anscheinend liegt in dem deuteronomischen Vers 11,23 Imitation vor.

פִּתְאֹם
4,20 פִּתְאֹם שֻׁדַּד[וּ] אָהֳלַ[י]

6,26 כִּי פִתְאֹם יָבֹא הַשֹּׁדֵ[ד] עָלֵינוּ
15,8 הִפַּלְתִּי עָלֶיהָ פִּתְאֹם עִיר וּבֶהָלוֹת
18,22 [כִּי]־תָבִיא עֲלֵיהֶם גְּדוּד פִּתְאֹם
51,8 פִּתְאֹם נָפְלָה בָבֶל וַתִּשָּׁבֵר

פִּתְאֹם ist ein Lieblingswort Jeremias. Von 25 Belegen, davon 10 im CP, entfallen 5 auf Jer. Im CP ist die Verteilung ganz ungleichmäßig: Das Adverb begegnet sonst nur in Jes (29,5; 30,13; 47,11; 48,3) und Mal 3,1.

צָפוֹן שֶׁבֶר גָּדוֹל,
4,6 כִּי רָעָה אָנֹכִי מֵבִיא מִצָּפוֹן וְשֶׁבֶר גָּדוֹל
6,1 כִּי רָעָה נִשְׁקְפָה מִצָּפוֹן וְשֶׁבֶר גָּדוֹל

Charakteristisch sind ferner der כִּי-Satz, רָעָה und die konkrete Abfolge מִצָּפוֹן וְשֶׁבֶר גָּדוֹל.

צָרִי
8,22 הֲצָרִי אֵין בְּגִלְעָד אִם־רֹפֵא אֵין שָׁם
46,11 עֲלִי גִלְעָד וּקְחִי צָרִי בְּתוּלַת בַּת־מִצְרָיִם
51,8 קְחוּ צֳרִי לְמַכְאוֹבָהּ אוּלַי תֵּרָפֵא

Die Verbindung לקח (Imperativ) mit Objekt צָרִי (46,11; 51,8) ist exklusiv. Sonst begegnet das Substantiv immer in Listen von Handelsgütern:
Gen 37,25 וְהִנֵּה אֹרַחַת יִשְׁמְעֵאלִים בָּאָה מִגִּלְעָד וּגְמַלֵּיהֶם נֹשְׂאִים נְכֹאת וּצְרִי וָלֹט
Gen 43,11 וְהוֹרִידוּ לָאִישׁ מִנְחָה מְעַט צָרִי וּמְעַט דְּבַשׁ נְכֹאת וָלֹט בָּטְנִים וּשְׁקֵדִים
Ez 27,17 הֵמָּה רֹכְלַיִךְ בְּחִטֵּי מִנִּית וּפַנַּג וּדְבַשׁ וָשֶׁמֶן וָצֳרִי נָתְנוּ מַעֲרָבֵךְ

קוֹל נתן קוֹל mit menschlichem Subjekt
4,16 נֹצְרִים בָּאִים מֵאֶרֶץ הַמֶּרְחָק וַיִּתְּנוּ עַל־עָרֵי יְהוּדָה קוֹלָם
22,20 עֲלִי הַלְּבָנוֹן וּצְעָקִי וּבַבָּשָׁן תְּנִי קוֹלֵךְ
48,34 מִזַּעֲקַת חֶשְׁבּוֹן עַד־אֶלְעָלֵה § עַד־יַהַץ \ עָרִיהֶם # נָתְנוּ קוֹלָם

Die Subjekte zu נתן קוֹל(בְּ) sind vorwiegend numinoser Natur. Am häufigsten belegt ist Jhwh, bei dem die Phrase sein Donnern beschreibt (Ex 9,23; 1 Sam 12,17.18; 2 Sam 22,14 // Ps 18,14; Jer 25,30; Joël 2,11; 4,11; Am 1,2; Ps 46,7; 68,34). Ferner begegnen in der Subjektsrolle Wolken als Gewitterphänomene (שְׁחָקִים Ps 77,18) und chaotische Wassermassen (תְּהוֹם Hab 3,10; vgl. Jer 51,55 מַיִם רַבִּים), aber auch die personifizierte Weisheit (Spr 1,20; 8,1). Außerdem wird so das Gebrüll von Tieren bezeichnet (כְּפִיר Am 3,4; Jer 2,15; עוֹף־הַשָּׁמַיִם Ps 104,12). Dieser Kategorie lässt sich auch Jer 12,8 zuordnen, wo das Verhalten des Subjekts נַחֲלָתִי mit dem eines Löwen (כְּאַרְיֵה) verglichen wird. Nur in 5 weiteren Fällen wird die Wendung mit menschlichen Subjekten versehen: Gen 45,2; Num 14,1; Spr 2,3; Klgl 2,7; 2 Chr 24,9. Im CP ist נתן קוֹל mit menschlichem Subjekt exklusiv.

קוֹל שמע, נְהִי,
9,18 כִּי קוֹל נְהִי נִשְׁמַע מִצִּיּוֹן

31,15 קוֹל בְּרָמָה נִשְׁמָע נְהִי בְּכִי תַמְרוּרִים

קוֹל **קוֹל → Ortsangabe → שׁמע-N**
3,21 קוֹל עַל־שְׁפָיִים נִשְׁמָע בְּכִי תַחֲנוּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
31,15 קוֹל בְּרָמָה נִשְׁמָע נְהִי בְּכִי תַמְרוּרִים
Die Konstellation ist im AT einzigartig, dazu auch die nachfolgende Erläuterung von קוֹל durch appositionelle Substantive.
Vgl. sonst die Abfolgen
קוֹל → שׁמע-N → Ortsangabe: Gen 45,16; Jer 9,18; Ez 10,5; Esr 3,13.
שׁמע-N → Ortsangabe → קוֹל: Jes 65,19; Jer 33,10-11.
שׁמע-N → קוֹל → Ortsangabe: Ez 19,9.
Ortsangabe → שׁמע-N → קוֹל: Jes 15,4; Jer 49,21 *MT*.

קוֹל **מִקּוֹל + Substantiv (st cs) + אֲבִיר**
8,16 מִקּוֹל מִצְהֲלוֹת אֲבִירָיו רָעֲשָׁה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
47,3 מִקּוֹל שַׁעֲטַת פַּרְסוֹת אֲבִירָיו מֵרַעַשׁ לְרִכְבּוֹ
Die Parallele erstreckt sich auch auf die Fortführung mit der √ רעשׁ.

קוֹל **מִקּוֹל + X → רעשׁ mit Subjekt אֶרֶץ**
8,16 מִקּוֹל מִצְהֲלוֹת אֲבִירָיו רָעֲשָׁה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ
49,21 מִקּוֹל נָפְלָם רָעֲשָׁה הָאָרֶץ צְעָקָה בְיַם־סוּף נִשְׁמַע [קוֹלָהּ]
50,46 מִקּוֹל נִתְפְּשָׂה בָבֶל נִרְעֲשָׁה הָאָרֶץ וּזְעָקָה בַגּוֹיִם נִשְׁמָע
50,46 ist eine adaptierte Kopie von 49,21. Für die Verknüpfung von רעשׁ und אֶרֶץ vgl. ferner Ri 5,4; 2 Sam 22,8; Jes 13,13; 24,18; Jer 10,10; 51,29; Joël 4,16; Hag 2,6.21; Ps 18,8; 60,4; 68,9; 77,19.

קום **עלה → קום**
קוּמוּ וְנַעֲלֶה
6,4 קוּמוּ וְנַעֲלֶה <עָלֶיהָ> בַּצָּהֳרָיִם
6,5 קוּמוּ וְנַעֲלֶה בַלָּיְלָה
31,6 *MT* קוּמוּ וְנַעֲלֶה \ וַעֲלוּ צִיּוֹן
Sonst
Ri 18,9 וְנַעֲלֶה עֲלֵיהֶם (BHS: l c Q^{Or} nonn Mss Vrs קוּמוּ) קוּמָה

קום Imperativ (+ ו) + עלה Imperativ
31,6 *AlT* קוּמוּ וְנַעֲלֶה \ וַעֲלוּ צִיּוֹן
49,28 קוּמוּ עֲלוּ אֶל־קֵדָר
49,31 קוּמ[וּ] עֲלוּ \ וַעֲלֵה אֶל־גּוֹי שַׁלֵּיו
Sonst קוּם עֲלֵה Gen 35,1; Jos 8,1; 2 Kön 1,3
Gleichgültig, ob in 31,6 *MT* oder *AlT* vorzuziehen ist, erhält man eine dreifache Bezeugung einer im CP analogielosen Wortverbindung.

קשׁב **קשׁב-H, Präpositionalobjekt דָּבָר**
6,19 כִּי עַל־דְּבָרַי לֹא הִקְשִׁיבוּ
18,18 וְ[אַל־]נַקְשִׁיבָה אֶל־כָּל־דְּבָרָיו

Sonst Spr 4,20; 29,12.
Vergleiche
23,18 *MT* מִי־הִקְשִׁיב [דְּבָרִי (דִּבְרוֹ𝔊)] וַיִּשְׁמָע

ראה ⇒ שׁאל שׁאל Imperativ: Rhetorische Aufforderung zur Selbstvergewisserung

רׇאשׁ II **שׁקה ,מֵי־רׇאשׁ-H**
8,14 כִּי יְהוָה [אֱלֹהֵינוּ] °הֲדִמָּנוּ° וַיַּשְׁקֵנוּ מֵי־רֹאשׁ
9,14 הִנְנִי מַאֲכִילָם [אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה] לַעֲנָה וְהִשְׁקִיתִים מֵי־רֹאשׁ
23,15 הִנְנִי מַאֲכִיל אוֹתָם לַעֲנָה וְהִשְׁקִתִים מֵי־רֹאשׁ
Bereits die Verbindung מֵי־רֹאשׁ ist exklusiv. In 9,14 hat ein dtr Redaktor ein Zitat aus 23,15 eingeflochten.

רוה **שׂבע ,רוה**
31,14 וְרִוֵּיתִי נֶפֶשׁ הַכֹּהֲנִים <בְּנֵי לֵוִי> [דָּשֶׁן] וְעַמִּי אֶת־טוּבִי יִשְׂבָּעוּ
46,10 וְאָכְלָה חֶרֶב <יְהוָה> וְשָׂבְעָה וְרָוְתָה מִדָּמָם
Sonst
Klgl 3,15 הִשְׂבִּיעַנִי בַמְּרוֹרִים הִרְוַנִי לַעֲנָה

רוּח ⇒ רוּח ,פּוּץ פּוּץ

רעשׁ ⇒ מְקוֹל קוֹל + X → רעשׁ mit Subjekt אֶרֶץ

רְפוּאָה
30,13 *MT* רְפָאוֹת \ רְפֻאַת תְּעָלָה אֵין לָךְ
46,11 לַשָּׁוְא הִרְבִּיתִי (הִרְבִּיתָ𝔊) רְפָאוֹת תְּעָלֶה אֵין לָךְ
Jer*G** hat das Substantiv in 30,13 verbal interpretiert.
Sonst
Ez 30,21 וְהִנֵּה לֹא־חֻבְּשָׁה לָתֵת רְפֻאוֹת
⇒ תְּעָלָה

שׂחק **Substantiviertes Partizip D-Stamm מְשַׂחֵק**
15,17 לֹא־יָשַׁבְתִּי בְּסוֹד־מְשַׂחֲקִים
30,19 וְיָצָא מֵהֶם תּוֹדָה וְקוֹל מְשַׂחֲקִים
31,4 וְיָצְאוּ בִּמְחוֹל מְשַׂחֲקִים
Sonst attributiv: 1 Sam 18,7; Sach 8,5; prädikativ: 2 Sam 6,5 // 2 Chr 13,8; Spr 8,30.31; 26,19; 1 Chr 15,29. Der maskuline Plural מְשַׂחֲקִים begegnet sonst nur in Sach 8,5; 2 Sam 6,5 // 2 Chr 13,8.

שְׂחֹק **היה לִשְׂחֹק**
20,7 הָיִיתִי לִשְׂחוֹק כָּל־הַיּוֹם
48,26 וְהָיָה לִשְׂחֹק גַּם־הוּא
48,39 וְהָיָה מוֹאָב לִשְׂחֹק וְלִמְחִתָּה לְכָל־סְבִיבָיו
Vergleiche היה שְׂחֹק

48,27 וְאִם לוֹא הַשְּׂחֹק הָיָה לְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל
Ijob 12,4 שְׂחֹק לְרֵעֵהוּ אֶהְיֶה קֹרֵא לֵאלוֹהַּ וַיַּעֲנֵהוּ שְׂחוֹק צַדִּיק תָּמִים
Klgl 3,14 הָיִיתִי שְׂחֹק לְכָל־עַמִּי

שְׂחֹק ist 15 Mal belegt. Für לִשְׂחֹק in anderen Zusammenhängen vgl. Koh 2,2; 10,19. Ferner Ps 126,2; Ijob 8,21; Spr 10,23; 14,13; Koh 7,3.6.

⇒ מְחִתָּה היה לִמְחִתָּה

שאל **שׁאל Imperativ: Aufrufe zur Selbstvergewisserung**

6,16 עִמְדוּ עַל־דְּרָכִים וּרְאוּ וְשַׁאֲלוּ לִנְתִיבוֹת עוֹלָם <וּרְאוּ>
18,13 שַׁאֲלוּ־נָא בַגּוֹיִם מִי שָׁמַע כָּאֵלֶּה
30,6 שַׁאֲלוּ־[נָא] וּרְאוּ אִם־יֹלֵד זָכָר
48,19 אֶל־דֶּרֶךְ עִמְדִי וְצַפִּי יוֹשֶׁבֶת עֲרוֹעֵר שַׁאֲלִי־נָס וְנִמְלָטָ[ה]

Sonst

Dtn 4,32 כִּי שְׁאַל־נָא לְיָמִים רִאשֹׁנִים אֲשֶׁר־הָיוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
Dtn 32,7 זְכֹר יְמוֹת עוֹלָם בִּינוּ שְׁנוֹת דֹּור־וָדֹור שְׁאַל אָבִיךָ וְיַגֶּדְךָ זְקֵנֶיךָ וְיֹאמְרוּ לָךְ
Ijob 8,8 כִּי־שְׁאַל־נָא לְדֹר רִישׁוֹן וְכוּנַן לְחֵקֶר אֲבוֹתָם
Ijob 12,7 וְאוּלָם שְׁאַל־נָא בְהֵמוֹת וְתֹרֶךָּ וְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְיַגֶּד־לָךְ

Diese Stilform fehlt sonst im CP. Die Koordination der Imperative von עמד und שׁאל ist nur in Jer 6,16 und 48,19 belegt. Die Koordination der Imperative von ראה und שׁאל ist nur in Jer 6,16 und 30,6 belegt.

⇒ עמד עמד (Aufforderung) mit Ortsangabe דֶּרֶךְ

שאף **שׁאף mit Objekt רוּחַ**

2,24 בְּאַוַּת נַפְשׁוֹ (נַפְשָׁהQ) שָׁאֲפָה רוּחַ
14,6 וּפְרָאִים עָמְדוּ עַל־שְׁפָיִם שָׁאֲפוּ רוּחַ [כַּתַּנִּים]

שבר **נתק מוֹסֵרוֹת ,שׁבר עֹל**

2,20 כִּי מֵעוֹלָם שָׁבַרְתִּי עֻלֵּךְ נִתַּקְתִּי מוֹסְרֹתַיִךְ
5,5 אַךְ הֵמָּה \ הֵנָּה יַחְדָּו שָׁבְרוּ עֹל נִתְּקוּ מוֹסֵרוֹת
30,8 אֶשְׁבֹּר עֻלּ[וֹ] מֵעַל צַוָּארֶךָ וּמוֹסְרוֹתַיִךְ אֲנַתֵּק

Der als Verheißung gefasste, syndetische Beleg in 30,8 ist eine redaktionelle Adaption. נתק מוֹסֵרוֹת ferner Nah 1,13; Ps 2,3; 107,14; שׁבר עֹל ferner Jer 28,2.4.11; Ez 34,27 *AlT*; vgl. שׁבר מטות עֹל Lev 26,13; Ez 34,27 *MT*.

שֶׁבֶר ⇒ צָפוֹן שֶׁבֶר גָּדוֹל ,צָפוֹן

שדד **שׁדד mit Subjekt אֹהֶל**

4,20 פִּתְאֹם שֻׁדַּד[וּ] אָהֳלַ[י]
10,20 אָהֳלִי שֻׁדָּד

Aktivische Fälle mit Objekt אֹהֶל sind nicht belegt.

שדד **שָׁדְדוּנוּ**

4,13 אוֹי לָנוּ כִּי שֻׁדָּדְנוּ
9,18 כִּי קוֹל נְהִי נִשְׁמַע מִצִּיּוֹן אֵיךְ שֻׁדָּדְנוּ

Vergleiche
Mi 2,4 וְנָהָה נְהִי נִהְיָה אָמַר שָׁרוֹד נְשַׁדֹּנוּ
Singularische Fälle sind nicht belegt.
⇒ אוֹי שׁדד → הוֹי / אוֹי

שָׁוְא **לַשָּׁוְא + Verb**
2,30 לַשָּׁוְא הִכֵּיתִי אֶת־בְּנֵיכֶם
4,30 לַשָּׁוְא תִּתְיַפִּי
6,29 לַשָּׁוְא צָרַף צָרוֹף
18,15 לַשָּׁוְא יִקַּטֵּרוּ
46,11 לַשָּׁוְא הִרְבֵּיתִי (הִרְבִּיתQ) רְפֻאוֹת
Dies sind zugleich sämtliche Belege von לַשָּׁוְא in Jer. Sonst Ex 20,7.7 // Dtn 5,11.11; Ps 24,4; 139,20. Dort gehen die Verben der Präpositionalverbindung immer voraus.

שׁוֹבֵב **הַבַּת הַשּׁוֹבֵבָה**
31,22 עַד־מָתַי תִּתְחַמָּקִין הַבַּת הַשּׁוֹבֵבָה
49,4 מַה־תִּתְהַלְלִי בָּעֲמָקִים [זָב עִמְקֵךְ] הַבַּת הַשּׁוֹבֵבָה
שׁוֹבֵב ferner Jer 8,5; Mi 2,4; vgl. שׁוֹבָב Jes 57,17; Jer 3,14.22.

שׁוּחָה
2,6 הַמּוֹלִיךְ אֹתָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר בְּאֶרֶץ עֲרָבָה וְשׁוּחָה
18,20 הַיְשֻׁלַּם תַּחַת־טוֹבָה רָעָה כִּי־כָרוּ °שׁוּחָה לְנַפְשִׁי
18,22 Q כִּי־כָרוּ שִׁיחָה (°שׁוּחָהQ) לְלָכְדֵנִי
Sonst Spr 22,14; 23,27.

שׁחת ⇒ אֲרִיֵה מַשְׁחִית,

שׁמע **שִׁמְעִי אֶרֶץ – Höraufruf an die Erde mit dem Imperativ von שׁמע**
6,19 שִׁמְעִי הָאָרֶץ
22,29 אֶרֶץ אֶרֶץ [אָרֶץ] שִׁמְעִי דְּבַר־יְהוָה
Vergleiche:
Dtn 32,1 הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וַאֲדַבֵּרָה וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי־פִי
Jes 1,2 שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם וְהַאֲזִינִי אֶרֶץ
Jes 8,9 וְהַאֲזִינוּ כֹּל מֶרְחַקֵּי־אָרֶץ
Jes 34,1 וּלְאֻמִּים הַקְשִׁיבוּ תִּשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ וּמְלֹאָהּ
Mi 1,2 שִׁמְעוּ עַמִּים כֻּלָּם הַקְשִׁיבִי אֶרֶץ וּמְלֹאָהּ
Die Verbindung mit dem Imperativ von שׁמע ist spezifisch für Jer.

שׁמע **שׁמע Imperativ mit Subjekt גּוֹי**
6,18 *TT* לָכֵן שִׁמְעוּ \ שִׁמְעוּ הַגּוֹיִם
31,10 שִׁמְעוּ דְּבַר־יְהוָה גּוֹיִם
In 6,18 wird die tiberische Interpretation durch die Fortsetzung mit dem Höraufruf an die Erde שִׁמְעִי הָאָרֶץ 19a bestätigt.

שמע **שמע mit Objekt זְעָקָה / צְעָקָה bzw. שמע-N mit Subjekt צְעָקָה / זְעָקָה**

18,22 *MT* תִּשְׁמַע \ תְּהִי זְעָקָה מִבָּתֵּיהֶם
20,16 וְיִשְׁמַע \ יִשְׁמַע זְעָקָה בַּבֹּקֶר וּתְרוּעָה בְּ[עֵת] צָהֳרָיִם
48,4 *MT* הִשְׁמִיעוּ \ הַשְׁמִיעוּ [זְעָקָה] צְעוֹרֶיהָ (צְעִירֶיהָ^{Q}) \ צֹעֲרָה
48,5 בְּמוֹרַד חוֹרֹנַיִם [צָרֵי] צַעֲקַת־שֶׁבֶר שָׁמֵעוּ \ שָׁמַעְתֶּם
49,21 *AlT* [כִּי] בְּיַם־סוּף נִשְׁמַע [קוֹלָהּ] צְעָקָה
50,46 וּזְעָקָה בַּגּוֹיִם נִשְׁמָע

In 18,22 ist die masoretische Lesart vorzuziehen. In *AlT* liegt die sekundäre Ersetzung eines Vollverbs durch היה vor wie z. B. in 38,6f.7d.
Sonst Ex 3,7; 22,22; Ijob 27,9; 34,28; Neh 5,6; 9,9. Vgl. שמע קוֹל צְעָקָה 1 Sam 4,14; Jes 65,19. Die Verbindung ist im CP exklusiv.

שמע ⇒ קוֹל קוֹל, נִהְי, שמע

שְׁפִי

3,2 שְׁאִי־עֵינַיִךְ עַל־שְׁפָיִם
3,21 קוֹל עַל־שְׁפָיִם נִשְׁמָע
4,11 רוּחַ צַח שְׁפָיִם בַּמִּדְבָּר
7,29 וּשְׁאִי עַל־שְׁפָיִם קִינָה
12,12 עַל־כָּל־שְׁפָיִם בַּמִּדְבָּר בָּאוּ שֹׁדְדִים
14,6 וּפְרָאִים עָמְדוּ עַל־שְׁפָיִם

Sonst Num 23,3; Jes 41,18; 49,9.

תַּן **מְעוֹן תַּנִּים**

9,10 וְנָתַתִּי אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַ͏ִם °לְגַלִּים° מְעוֹן תַּנִּים
10,22 לָשׂוּם אֶת־עָרֵי יְהוּדָה שְׁמָמָה מְעוֹן תַּנִּים
49,33 וְהָיְתָה °חָצוֹר° לְמְעוֹן תַּנִּים
51,37 *MT* וְהָיְתָה בָבֶל לְ[גַלִּים מְעוֹן־תַּנִּים] שַׁמָּה

Vgl. מְקוֹם תַּנִּים Ps 44,20 (Text? vgl. BHS).

תְּעָלָה II

30,13 רְפָאוֹת \ רֻפָּאת תְּעָלָה אֵין לָךְ
46,11 לַשָּׁוְא הִרְבֵּיתִי (הִרְבִּיתְ^{Q}) רְפָאוֹת תְּעָלָה אֵין לָךְ
48,2 *AlT* אֵין עוֹד תְּהִלַּת \ תְּעָלַת מוֹאָב
⇒ רְפוּאָה

תְּרוּעָה **תְּרוּעַת מִלְחָמָה**

4,19 כִּי קוֹל שׁוֹפָר שָׁמַעְתִּי (שָׁמַעְתְּ^{Q}) נַפְשִׁי תְּרוּעַת מִלְחָמָה
49,2 וְהִשְׁמַעְתִּי אֶל־רַבַּת [בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן] תְּרוּעַת מִלְחָמָה

Vergleiche
Am 1,14 בְּתְרוּעָה בְּיוֹם מִלְחָמָה

תְּרוּעָה **שמע תְּרוּעָה**

4,19 כִּי קוֹל שׁוֹפָר שָׁמַעְתִּי (שָׁמַעְתְּ^{Q}) נַפְשִׁי תְּרוּעַת מִלְחָמָה

20,16 וְשָׁמַע זְעָקָה בַּבֹּקֶר וּתְרוּעָה בְּ[עֵת] צָהֳרָיִם
49,2 וְהִשְׁמַעְתִּי אֶל־רַבַּת [בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹן] תְּרוּעַת מִלְחָמָה
Vergleiche
1 Sam 4,6 וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ פְלִשְׁתִּים אֶת־קוֹל הַתְּרוּעָה

Imperativ mit Objekt, gebildet als Infinitiv mit enklitischem Personalpronomen

15,15 דַּע שְׂאֵתִי עָלֶיךָ חֶרְפָּה
18,20 זְכֹר עָמְדִי לְפָנֶיךָ

Verursachung-Folge-Satzpaare

Der gewählte Titel ist lediglich ein Etikett zur knappen Bezeichnung von Sequenzen folgender Art: Zwei Verbalsätze, deren Prädikate vom selben Verb gebildet sind, folgen syndetisch aufeinander. Der erste Satz beschreibt eine Verursachung, die entweder durch die Semantik des Verbs im Grundstamm (**בנה** 31,4; **רפא** 17,4a) oder durch einen kausativen Stamm (D, H) zum Ausdruck kommt. Der Nachsatz stellt den Effekt dar, indem er das Verb in den Grundstamm (nur nach kausativem Vordersatz: 11,18; 31,18f) oder in einen Passivstamm transformiert, wobei das Objekt des Vordersatzes nunmehr die Subjektsrolle übernimmt. Das Kausalverhältnis kann als eingetreten konstatiert (*qatal* → *wa=yiqtul* 11,18 *MT*; 20,7; 31,18), angekündigt (*yiqtul* → *w=qatal* 31,4) oder verlangt (Imperativ → *w=yiqtul* 11,18 *AlT*; 17,14) werden. Die Sätze sind kurz; der Vordersatz umfasst ein oder zwei Wörter und repräsentiert sein Objekt durch ein enklitisches Personalpronomen. Das Prädikat des Nachsatzes nimmt die Erstposition ein, und zwischen die beiden Prädikate tritt allenfalls eine Anrede (17,14ab; 20,7).

11,18 וַיהוָה הוֹדִיעַנִי\עֲנִי וָאֵדָעָה \ וְאֵדָעָה
17,14ab רְפָאֵנִי יְהוָה וְאֵרָפֵא
17,14cd הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי וְאִוָּשֵׁעָה
20,7 פִּתִּיתַנִי יְהוָה וָאֶפָּת
31,4 עוֹד אֶבְנְךָ וְנִבְנִית בְּתוּלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל
31,18bc יִסַּרְתַּנִי וָאִוָּסֵר <אֲנִי> כְּעֵגֶל לֹא לָמֻד<תִּי>
31,18ef הֲשִׁיבֵנִי וְאָשׁוּבָה
Sonst
Ps 102,27 כַּלְבוּשׁ תַּחֲלִיפֵם וְיַחֲלֹפוּ
Vergleiche
2 Kön 7,4 אִם־יְחַיֵּנוּ נִחְיֶה וְאִם־יְמִיתֵנוּ וָמָתְנוּ

Auswertung

Das aufgelistete Vokabular legt ein dichtes Gewebe von Sprachparallelen über zahlreiche Einheiten des Jeremiabuches von zumeist poeti-

scher Gestalt:[20] die sog. Frühzeitverkündigung in Kap. 2-6*; die Unheilsankündigungen samt den Gottesklagen in Kap. 8-20* (mit auffälligen Dünnstellen bei der Götzenpolemik 10,1-16 und den vermischten Materialien in 16,16-17,13); die sog. Konfessionen in den Kap. 11-20*; die Dürreliturgie in Kap. 14*; die Königsspruchsammlung in Kap. 21-22*; die Sprüche gegen die Falschpropheten in Kap. 23* und die Trostschrift in Jer 30-31* (durchweg unter Abzug prosaischer Komponenten). In den Fremdvölkersprüchen überspannt das Netz die ersten sieben Gedichte nach dem masoretischen Arrangement (von Ägypten bis Kedar und Hazor: 46-49,33*). Dann klafft eine Lücke im Elamspruch (49,34-39), doch am Beginn der Babylonworte leben die Indikatoren kurzfristig wieder auf, bevor sie fast völlig verebben, die Dubletten zu früheren Passagen ausgenommen (50,41-43 // 6,22b-24; 50,44-46 // 49,19-21; 51,15-19 // 10,12-16). Nahezu unberührt bleiben die deuterojeremianischen Partien, bei erklärbaren Ausnahmen: 7,29 mit dem Wort שְׂפִי zitiert anerkanntermaßen einen poetischen Passus, wie schon der Umbruch in BHS voraussetzt; 9,14 benutzt das Substantiv ראשׁ II in einer Anleihe aus 23,15; ebenso dürfte 13,14 mit וְהָאָבוֹת וְהַבָּנִים יַחְדָּו von 6,21 abhängen (s. unter יַחְדָּו); 30,8 אֶשְׁבֹּר עֻלּ[וֹ] מֵעַל צַוָּארֶךָ וּמוֹסְרוֹתֶיךָ אֲנַתֵּק reformuliert 2,20 und 5,5 (s. unter שׁבר). Die Entlehnung aus älteren Vorlagen gehörte zu den üblichen Verfahren der deuterojeremianischen Ergänzer. Die signifikante Distribution und Belegdichte des untersuchten Vokabulars treten besonders eindrucksvoll zutage, wenn man sie durch Hervorhebungen im Text des Jeremiabuches visualisiert.

Für literarische Parallelen sind grundsätzlich mehrere Ursachen denkbar. Sie können rein zufällig entstanden sein; sie können aus gemeinsamer Verfasserschaft herrühren, mithin einen Idiolekt widerspiegeln; sie können das geprägte Sprachgut einer Gruppe, beispielsweise eines Jüngerkreises oder einer Schule, repräsentieren, also einen Soziolekt; und sie können auf literarischer Nachahmung beruhen. Die erste Alternative darf als ausgeschlossen gelten, denn der Zufall mag, wie oben betont, in Ausnahmefällen das Bild verzeichnet haben, doch

20 Die poetische Prägung dient daher bei der Frage nach jeremianischer Autorschaft nur als grober Anhaltspunkt. Ohnehin verläuft der Übergang von Prosa zur Poesie fließend, weswegen nicht immer Einvernehmen darüber erzielt werden kann, ob eine Einheit in Textausgaben, die Poesie und Prosa unterscheiden, stichisch oder bündig darzustellen ist. So wird beispielsweise aus der 1. Konfession 11,18-20 nur V. 20 einhellig als Poesie beurteilt, während der Charakter der Vv. 18-19 strittig bleibt. Für Prosa optieren etwa W. RUDOLPH, Jeremia, HAT 12, ³1968, 80 (vgl. BHS); W. MCKANE, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, Vol. I, ICC, 1986, 253f.; G. WANKE, Jeremia I (Anm. 4), 123f.; Poesie erkennen W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1, Hermeneia, 1986, 363.367; (P. C. CRAIGIE /) P.H. KELLEY / J.F. DRINKARD, Jeremiah 1-25, WBC 26, 1991, 174.176.

ist das Material zu umfangreich, als dass es allein diesem Faktor angelastet werden könnte. Ebenso wenig überzeugt, das Vokabular als gruppenspezifisches Idiom zu bewerten, denn dazu ist seine Zusammensetzung völlig ungeeignet, weil ihm jeder gemeinsame konzeptionelle Nenner abgeht. Zugleich sind manche Züge nur als Frucht zufälliger persönlicher Stilvorlieben deutbar, wie sie einen Idiolekt kennzeichnen. Schulen oder Jüngerkreise werden aber nicht von beliebigen Redensarten zusammengehalten, sondern von gemeinsam verfochtenen Ideen.

Dies sei an Einzelheiten illustriert. Gemäß den Themenschwerpunkten der Poesie in Jer ist das Verzeichnis von Begriffen beherrscht, die für die klagende Schilderung von Kriegs- und Katastrophenszenarien taugen. Dieser Wortschatz offeriert ein sprachliches Instrumentarium für die Dramatisierung typischer Situationen, greift jedoch nicht auf die konzeptionelle Ebene, also die theologische Reflexion des Beschriebenen über. Zu den auffälligsten Eigenarten des Vokabulars gehört, dass es zwar reich ist an dramatisierenden Elementen, aber arm an solchen mit eindeutig religiöser Konnotation.[21] Daher lässt es sich nur einem thematischen, aber keinem konzeptionellen Generalnenner zuordnen, ein fundamentaler Unterschied zu vergleichbaren Erscheinungen wie den priesterlichen, deuteronomistischen und deuterojeremianischen Schulsprachen. Aber sogar der kriegerische Einschlag gilt bloß für einen Großteil des Korpus, während der nicht unerhebliche Rest andere Züge trägt. Ein schmales Bündel von Einträgen verrät einen sapientialen Hintergrund, weil Parallelen aus der Weisheitsliteratur vorliegen oder zumindest inhaltliche Gründe diesen Horizont nahelegen; so die Tripelfragen (מַדּוּעַ → אִם → הֵ); das Adjektiv סָכָל; die Kollokation von עוֹלָם, נְתִיבָה und דֶּרֶךְ; die Verbindung von קשׁב-H mit דָּבָר als präpositionalem Objekt; oder die Aufrufe zur Selbstvergewisserung mit שׁאל. Vom Ertappen eines Diebs ist naturgemäß vor allem im Rechtsleben die Rede (גָּנַב → מצא).

Daneben verbleibt ein ansehnlicher Vorrat an Merkmalen, die gegenüber Konzeptionen, Horizonten, Themen und Gattungen neutral sind und nur auf regellosen individuellen Präferenzen, also einem Idiolekt fußen können. Es wäre abwegig, einen Kreis zu postulieren, der – womöglich über Generationen hinweg – ein Gruppenidiom pflegte, das sich ausgerechnet durch solch beliebige Charakteristika abgegrenzt hätte wie dem Hang, Kausalsätze bevorzugt mit כִּי גַם zu eröffnen, das Präpositionalobjekt von בכה mit ל statt עַל (bzw. אֶל) zu markieren und

21 Zu nennen sind hier lediglich die Lemmata גּוֹלָה (Götter ziehen in die Verbannung), חֶרְפָּה (das Wort Jhwhs wird zur Schande), ידע (אַתָּה יְהוָה יָדַעְתָּ); נטה (נטה יָד-H ist nur mit göttlichem Subjekt belegt); פְּקֻדָּה (עֵת \ שְׁנַת פְּקֻדָּה); vgl. נָבִיא (נַם־נָבִיא נַם־כֹּהֵן).

dem Verb לאה einen Infinitivus constructus präpositionslos unterzuordnen, während man bei הִיה לִשְׂחֹק umgekehrt auf den präpositionalen Anschluss achtete. Oder wären es plausible Marker eines Soziolekts, die Verbalform וַתּוּכָל und das substantivierte Partizip מְשַׂחֵק zu häufen, מִדֵּי mit דבר-D zu kombinieren und לַשָּׁוְא einem verbalen Beziehungswort vor- statt nachzustellen? Ist ein Zirkel denkbar, wo man über einen nennenswerten Zeitraum seine Zugehörigkeit über Sprechweisen signalisierte, wie sie oben als „Verursachung-Folge-Satzpaare“ etikettiert wurden? Beachtenswert ist ferner die Aufzählung Nomen (Plural) + ו + Nomen (Plural) + יַחְדָּו, eine durch kaum merkliche Besonderheiten abgesetzte Variante aus einem Fächer ähnlicher Reihungen, die, wie ihre Belege zeigen, weit verbreitet und in vielfältigen Zusammenhängen einsetzbar waren. Wäre die auf Jer beschränkte Spielart Indikator eines Soziolekts, müsste sich eine Mehrzahl von Ergänzern überwiegend an genau diese eng definierte Variante gehalten haben. Die Wahrscheinlichkeit eines Gruppenidioms schrumpft noch weiter, nimmt man Einträge wie die folgenden hinzu: זֶה ;אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי אַךְ + Substantiv mit ePP der 2. Person; חרה-t; יצא הַשָּׂדֶה ;כל mit enklitischem Personalpronomen der 3. Ps Sg + Partizip; לֹא-כֵן; die Kombination von מנע mit zwei Nominalgruppen, jeweils bestehend aus Objekt und adverbieller Präpositionalverbindung; נתן קוֹל mit menschlichem Subjekt; die Kollokation von רוה und שׂבע; Höraufrufe an die Erde mit dem Imperativ von שׁמע; die Ausdrücke גַּם־נָבִיא גַּם־כֹּהֵן ;מִצְהָלָה ;מְרוּצָה I; נְטִישׁוֹת und פַּתְאֹם. Anfügen lassen sich einige Begriffe aus dem Themenfeld „Krankheit und Heilung“, das zwar auch bei anderen Propheten auftritt, aber in Jer einen buchtypischen Wortschatz ausgebildet hat (מַכָּה נַחְלָה, צֳרִי, רְפוּאָה, תְּעָלָה II). Dass ein derart buntes Sammelsurium von Lexemen, Wortverbindungen, Redewendungen, grammatischen Konstruktionen und Stilfiguren – oder auch nur Ausschnitte daraus – bei Fehlen jeder konzeptionellen Klammer das einende Repertoire einer Sprechergemeinde ausgemacht haben sollte, ist ausgeschlossen.

Keine Abhilfe schafft der Ausweg, auf das Postulat soziolektaler Einflüsse zu verzichten, somit die aus dem Mangel eines gemeinsamen Nenners erwachsenden Probleme zu vermeiden und die Sprachparallelen auf rein literarische Imitation zurückzuführen. Damit lassen sich lediglich Ausnahmefälle aus der obigen Liste erklären, jedoch bei weitem nicht das gesamte Korpus. Das zeigt einerseits dessen nähere Beschaffenheit, andererseits das Studium der solide belegten Formen von Nachahmung in der Jeremiatradition, wo Imitation und Zitate durchaus eine prominente Rolle spielen. Um mit dem letzteren Punkt zu beginnen: Sicher nachweisbare Formen der Zitation und Nachahmung haben bereits die dtr Redaktoren ausgiebig praktiziert, wobei sie einige

charakteristische Arbeitstechniken anwandten. Erstens entlehnten sie regelmäßig Redewendungen aus älteren poetischen Stücken innerhalb des Buches. Weiter oben wurden nach diesem Muster einzelne Prosabelege aus dem Verzeichnis erklärt; so ist 9,14 הִנְנִי מַאֲכִילָם [] לַעֲנָה וְהַשְׁקִיתִים מֵי־רֹאשׁ (s. רֹאשׁ II) aus der nahezu identischen Parallele 23,15 geschöpft, und 13,14 וְהָאָבוֹת וְהַבָּנִים יַחְדָּו (s. יַחְדָּו) dürfte auf dem gleich lautenden Passus 6,21 basieren.[22] Derlei Adaptionen nahmen die dtr Redaktoren regelmäßig vor, weswegen sich die Beispiele vermehren lassen.[23] Zweitens flochten die Ergänzer mitunter Passagen im Umfang mehrerer Sätze ein, die durch ihre poetische, individuelle Gestaltung aus ihrem prosaischen, formelhaften Kontext herausragen und anscheinend unversehrte oder kaum veränderte Einzelsprüche bzw. Zitate aus Quellen darstellen, die sonst nicht erhalten geblieben sind. Oben wurde diese Annahme für 7,29 akzeptiert; weitere anerkannte und daher ebenfalls im Umbruch der BHS markierte Exempel sind 11,15-16 und 22,6b-7. Drittens schließlich konnten die Redaktoren poetische Vorbilder lose paraphrasieren, sodass wörtliche Übernahmen, wenn vorhanden, völlig in ihrem neuen Prosagewand aufgingen und das Original unwiederbringlich verloren ist; es sei denn, es wurde separat überliefert, wie es mit dem poetischen Spruch 21,11-14 geschah, der als einziger neben einem prosaischen Derivat (22,1-5) überlebt hat und dieses redaktionelle Verfahren empirisch bezeugt.

Will man die aufgelisteten Sprachparallelen aus literarischer Imitation herleiten, verstört die Tatsache, dass das Vergleichsmaterial aus dtr Hand dafür keine geeignete Analogie bereithält. Die beiden letzteren Verfahren entfallen schon deshalb, weil sie für die Einschmelzung ganzer Sprüche zuständig sind. Aber auch wenn die Deuteronomisten bloße Wörter oder Wendungen aufgriffen, wählten sie auffälligere Elemente, wie sie sich mitunter auch im obigen Material finden, allerdings als Minorität gegenüber einer Überzahl von Einträgen eher unterschwelliger Natur, wo die Wahrnehmung der Gemeinsamkeiten hochgradige Aufmerksamkeit verlangt. Auf solche kaum merklichen Übereinstimmungen baut man nicht, wenn man sicherstellen möchte, dass die Parallelen erkannt werden. Hinzu kommt, dass die Deuteronomisten in ihren Gottesreden zwar wie die ältere Poesie den expliziten Anspruch erheben, mit der Stimme Jeremias zu reden, was auch ihre

22 Vgl. auch 30,8 אֶשְׁבֹּר עֻלּ[וֹ] מֵעַל צַוָּארֶךָ וּמוֹסְרוֹתֶיךָ אֲנַתֵּק, wo eine jüngere Redaktion 2,20 und 5,5 abwandelt.

23 Belege bei W. THIEL, Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25, WMANT 41, 1973; Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 26-45. Mit einer Gesamtbeurteilung der deuteronomistischen Redaktion des Buches Jeremia, WMANT 52, 1981. Dies gilt unbeschadet abweichender Beurteilungen im Einzelnen.

lexikalischen Anleihen bestätigen; trotzdem verraten sie keinerlei Bedürfnis, sich dem Klang ihrer Vorlagen insgesamt anzugleichen. Dem schob schon ihre Grundsatzentscheidung einen Riegel vor, die Poesie praktisch total zugunsten der Prosa aufzugeben. Im Übrigen ist ihre Sprache zwar ein Musterbeispiel der steten Bindung an Vorbilder, freilich an solche, die sich überwiegend außerhalb des bearbeiteten Buches befanden. In dieser antiken Welt scheint niemand befürchtet zu haben, formaler Eigensinn könne die Glaubwürdigkeit der pseudepigraphischen Fiktion gefährden. Für die Deuteronomisten war es die Treue zu ihrer eigenen Gedanken- und Sprachwelt, die den Einklang mit dem jeremianischen Erbe garantierte.

In den postdtr Phasen der Redaktionsgeschichte des Jeremiabuches behielt die sprachliche Nachahmung ihre führende Rolle, allerdings ganz in den Spuren der Deuteronomisten, woraus der breite Strom der deuterojeremianischen Tradition erwuchs. Das ist aus zwei Gründen bloß natürlich. Erstens: Wer damals das dtr redigierte Jeremiabuch las, betrieb selbstverständlich keine Literarkritik, sondern hörte im kompletten Werk, wie von den Redaktoren gewollt, die Stimme des verehrten Propheten, der jetzt allerdings weithin in dtr Tonfall predigte. Zweitens wirkte eine Gesetzmäßigkeit ein, die bereits die Arbeit der dtr Redaktion gefördert hatte: Ein Idiom, das derart von geprägten Wendungen überquillt wie das Deuteronomistische bzw. Deuterojeremianische, ist sehr viel leichter wiederzuerkennen, zu erlernen und nachzuahmen als die Sprache der poetischen Stücke, wo man kennzeichnende Züge mühsam zusammenklauben muss. Ohnehin weisen zahlreiche Einträge der obigen Liste nur zwei Belege auf, sodass diese Merkmale, gingen sie auf verschiedene Hände zurück, ehemals gar nicht typisch gewesen wären, sondern es allenfalls durch sekundäre Wiederholung erstmals hätten werden können; die Signifikanz wäre dann nicht Ursache, sondern umgekehrt Folge der Imitation. Die deuterojeremianische Phraseologie konnte dagegen sogar von dtr Quellen außerhalb des Buches zehren. Obendrein war sie eng mit theologischen Themen und Konzepten verquickt, die in der Exilszeit und darüber hinaus hohe Aktualität besaßen, eine Besonderheit, die bei den wiederkehrenden Formulierungen der poetischen Abschnitte ungleich schwächer ausgeprägt ist. Sollte daher das Jeremiabuch eine Schulsprache oder literarische Angleichung an einen wiedererkennbaren Zungenschlag angeregt haben, mussten sich die deuterojeremianischen Passagen als natürliche Ressource anbieten. Genau dies bestätigt die Redaktionsgeschichte: Wo Ergänzer formelhaftes Vokabular gebrauchten, verblieben sie bis hinab zu den allerjüngsten prämasoretischen Revisionen im Bann der deuterojeremianischen Topik. Eben deshalb hat

man die betroffenen Partien früher nahezu komplett als dtr beurteilt.[24] Der Sog dieses Erbes wirkte sogar über die Buchgrenzen hinaus: Wollte man andernorts auf das Jeremiabuch anspielen, schlüpfte man ins deuterojeremianische Sprachgewand, wie es beispielhaft die „subjeremianischen" Texte Sach 1,4-6; Jona 3,5-10; Dan 9 und die erschließbare hebräische Vorlage von Bar 1,1-3,8 taten.[25] Die Verbreitung dieser Praxis über nach Horizont und Abfassungszeit derart weit gestreute Literaturen illustriert drastisch, wie erfolgreich dieses Idiom zum Markenzeichen mit universalem Wiedererkennungswert aufgestiegen war – und wie leicht man es erlernen konnte. Wer wie Jeremia klingen wollte, schrieb deuterojeremianisch. Wer daher poetische Einheiten aus post-dtr Epochen herleitet und ihre Gemeinsamkeiten mit der älteren Poesie auf Imitation zurückführt, sollte erläutern, warum die Nachahmer entgegen dem sonst übermächtigen Trend es konsequent vermieden, sich bei den deuterojeremianischen Partien zu bedienen.

Doch damit nicht genug: So sehr die deuterojeremianische Prosa zur Imitation einlud, so wenig taugten die poetischen Stücke dazu. Gingen Teile von deren eigentümlichem sprachlichem Netzwerk auf planvolle Nachbildung zurück, rätselt man, welche Arbeitsphilosophie die Urheber getrieben haben müsste. Die Frage sei exemplarisch durchgespielt an zwei Teilkorpora, deren Autorschaft besonders umstritten ist: den Konfessionen und den Fremdvölkersprüchen. Sollte der Verfasser[26] der Konfessionen in 11,19 die Verben חשׁב und כרת relativ nahe hintereinander eingesetzt haben, weil ihm die Kollokation aus 48,2 bekannt war (bzw. umgekehrt, sollten die Fremdvölkersprüche die empfangende Seite repräsentieren)? Bezog er für חרה-t in 12,5 seine Inspiration aus 22,15? Ließ er in 15,17 Jeremia vom Kreis der מְשַׂחֲקִים reden, weil von solchen auch die Trostschrift sprach, wenngleich in ganz anders gestimmten Kontexten (30,19; 31,4)? Und sollte der Prophet anschließend mit זַעַם erfüllt sein (מלא), weil 6,11 eine ähnliche Aussage mit חֵמָה getroffen hatte? Ist וְ[אַל]־נַקְשִׁיבָה אֶל־כָּל־דִּבְרָיו 18,18 aus עַל־דְּבָרַי לֹא הִקְשִׁיבוּ 6,19 abgeleitet? Hat der Autor in 18,20.22 zweimal das Graben einer „Grube" (שׁוּחָה) erwähnt, weil eine solche auch in 2,6 vorkommt, obwohl wieder in andersartigem Zusammenhang? Legte er in

24 Dafür standen namentlich die Arbeiten W. THIELS (Anm. 23); dazu H.-J. STIPP, Probleme des redaktionsgeschichtlichen Modells der Entstehung des Jeremiabuches, in: W. GROSS (Hg.), Jeremia und die »deuteronomistische Bewegung«, BBB 98, 1995, 225-262.

25 Vgl. H.-J. STIPP, Jeremia im Parteienstreit. Studien zur Textentwicklung von Jer 26, 36-43 und 45 als Beitrag zur Geschichte Jeremias, seines Buches und judäischer Parteien im 6. Jahrhundert, BBB 82, 1992, 39-41.

26 Der Einfachheit halber steht im Folgenden der Singular, doch gewinnen die Fragen natürlich noch an Dringlichkeit, wenn mit mehreren Autoren gerechnet wird.

20,7 Jeremia gegenüber Jhwh das Wort וַתּוּכָל in den Mund, weil Jhwh dasselbe Wort in 3,5 an Israel richtet? Konstruierte der Verfasser im nächsten Satz הִיה לִשְׂחֹק entgegen dem Üblichen mit Präposition, weil er sich 48,26.39 zum Vorbild nahm – oder umgekehrt? Ordnete er in 20,8 מִדֵּי einer Form von דבר-D über als Verbeugung vor 31,20? Und eignete er sich bestimmte Stilfiguren deshalb an, weil er sie in den poetischen Teilen seiner Vorlage mehrfach vorfand, wie einen Kausalsatz mit כִּי גַם zu eröffnen (12,6), פִּתְאֹם beizufügen (18,22), לאה mit präpositionslosem Infinitiv zu verknüpfen (20,9) oder בוש um מְאֹד zu bereichern (20,11)? Sollten schließlich die sog. Verursachung-Folge-Satzpaare (11,18; 17,14.14; 20,7) den ähnlich gearteten Strukturen in der Trostschrift nachempfunden sein (31,4.18.18) – und wenn ja, wozu?

Gleichartige Zweifel nährt der Befund in den Fremdvölkersprüchen. Hat der Dichter das Brausen des Wassers in 46,7 mit נעשׁ beschrieben, weil 5,22 dasselbe tut? Sollte das Wortpaar שׂבע + רוה 47,10 aus 31,14 entlehnt sein? Ist die Frage אֵיךְ תֹּאמְרוּ גִּבּוֹרִים אֲנָחְנוּ 48,14 dem Vers 8,8 אֵיכָה תֹּאמְרוּ חֲכָמִים אֲנַחְנוּ abgeschaut? Folgt die Rede vom Ertappen eines Diebes 48,27 dem Vorbild von 2,26? Ist in 48,32 בכה mit ל konstruiert, um Übereinstimmung mit 22,10 herzustellen, und fällt anschließend das Wort נְטִישׁוֹת im Kielwasser von 5,10? Ist das „dröhnende" (המה) Herz in 48,36 von 4,19 infiziert? Wurden auch hier mehrere Stilfiguren aufgegriffen, weil sie als jeremianischer Standard galten, wie die Position von לַשָּׁוְא vor dem verbalen Beziehungswort (46,11); Kausalsätze mit כִּי גַם (46,21; 48,34); die Verbindung לא־כֵן (48,30); die Applikation von נתן קוֹל auf menschliche Akteure (48,34) und die sog. Tripelfragen (49,1)? Zum Wortpaar חשׁב und כרת in 48,2 und zum präpositionalen Anschluss in הִיה לִשְׂחֹק in 48,26.39 siehe oben zu den Konfessionen!

Diese Fragen ließen sich allenfalls dann bejahen, könnte man zusätzlich erklären, was der Verfasser von solchen Anleihen erhofft haben mochte. Die Aneignung eines typisch „jeremianischen" Tonfalls kann es, wie gezeigt, nicht gewesen sein. Wollte er literarische Brücken schlagen, und erwartete er, dass sein Publikum derart verschleierte Signale wahrnähme – und das auch noch zu Recht, obwohl viele Verweise bald für Jahrtausende in Vergessenheit gerieten, bis sie mittels einer rechnergestützten Konkordanz[27] endlich wieder ans Tageslicht gefördert wurden? Allzu viele Querbezüge sind derart, dass es fernab jeder Wahrscheinlichkeit läge, wollte man ihre Ursache in einer Strategie der gezielten Aufmerksamkeitslenkung suchen.

27 C. HARDMEIER / E. TALSTRA / A. GROVES, Stuttgarter elektronische Studienbibel, [2]2006.

Die Übereinstimmungen können späteren Ergänzern auch nicht einfach spontan und planlos unterlaufen sein, etwa weil sie ähnliche Gattungen verwendeten. Dagegen spricht schon, dass ein beträchtlicher Anteil des Materials seiner Natur nach auf keine Textsorte festgelegt ist. Aber auch die gattungsaffinen Phänomene wurden oben gerade deshalb registriert, weil sie ein einziges biblisches bzw. prophetisches Buch auszeichnen, genauer: bestimmte Teilkorpora daraus, obwohl diese überwiegend aus Textsorten bestehen, die auch andernorts gut belegt sind, aber sonst die fraglichen Merkmale vermissen lassen. Umgekehrt verknüpft das Vokabular Einheiten verschiedener Gattungen innerhalb des Buches. Wenn die Wortwahl bloß der Gattung folgte, wäre unerklärlich, dass so viele signifikante Gemeinsamkeiten die Konfessionen buchintern mit Texten wie den Drohworten gegen Israel, Juda und die Fremdvölker und sogar mit der Trostschrift verzahnen, während die betreffenden Bindeglieder bei den buchexternen Exemplaren der nächstverwandten Gattung, den Klagepsalmen, nicht auftreten. Und warum sind die Fremdvölkersprüche so eng mit der übrigen Poesie des Buches verwoben, freilich durch Merkmale, die den vergleichbaren Gedichten in anderen Büchern abgehen?

Unter den Einträgen, die Textsortengrenzen überschreiten, sind jene besonders aussagekräftig, die konträre Gattungen zusammenschließen, indem sich die Belege gleichermaßen über Heils- und Unheilsworte streuen, ohne dass sie als Korrespondenzglieder in einem Bezugsnetz gedeutet werden könnten, wo etwa die Heilsvariante als reinterpretierende Umkehrung der Unheilsvariante lesbar ist. Um Nachahmung und Zitat definitiv auszuschließen, seien nur Parallelen besonders niederschwelliger Art berücksichtigt. Die thematische Komposition der Poesie in Jer begrenzt zwar die Möglichkeit eindeutiger Beispiele, da einer Fülle von Unheilsszenarien und Klagen bloß ein kleines Bündel an Heilsworten gegenübersteht, was die Chance, dass Elemente in beiden Textgruppen auftreten und zusätzlich der genannten Bedingung gehorchen, nachhaltig schmälert. Trotzdem gibt es solche Fälle. Die Verursachung-Folge-Satzpaare verklammern die Konfessionen (11,18; 17,14.14; 20,7) mit der Trostschrift (31,4.18.18) und begegnen daher sowohl in klagenden als auch verheißenden Zusammenhängen. Dasselbe gilt von substantiviertem מְשֹׂחֵק (15,17; 30,19; 31,4). Das Wortpaar רוה und שׂבע wird in 31,14 der Heilsansage, in 46,10 hingegen einer Drohung dienstbar gemacht. מנע mit seiner buchtypischen Fortsetzung spricht in 2,25 eine Anklage aus, in 31,16 Trost.

Die Neutralität gegenüber Textsorten gilt noch für weitere Beispiele, selbst wenn diese nicht in Kontexten solch gegensätzlicher Tendenz bezeugt sind wie die vorigen und ihre breite Einsetzbarkeit lediglich

aus ihrer generellen Eigenart folgt. Hinzuweisen ist etwa auf לַשָּׁוְא und erst recht das Spezifikum der jeremianischen Belege, nämlich die Stellung zum modifizierten Verb. Es sind keine gattungsbedingten Restriktionen erkennbar, was den Gebrauch und die Satzposition dieser Präpositionalverbindung angeht. Entsprechend vielgestaltig sind die vorfindlichen Verwendungsweisen. מִדֵּי lässt sich in beliebigen Textsorten dem Verb דבר überordnen. Die Aufforderung, sich am Wege zu postieren (s. unter עמד), kann in ganz verschiedenartigen Situationen ergehen. In 6,16 richtet Jhwh sie rein metaphorisch an die Judäer als Geheiß, sich der Maßstäbe des rechten Lebenswandels zu vergewissern; zusammen mit der anschließend zitierten Weigerung dient sie als Schuldaufweis. In 48,19 fungiert sie im Rahmen einer Kriegsszenerie als zwar fiktionaler, aber buchstäblich gemeinter Aufruf, sich an einer verkehrsgünstigen Stelle Klarheit über die krisenhafte Lage zu verschaffen. Abermals kann von Gattungsabhängigkeit keine Rede sein. Dasselbe gilt für die Wendung בכה ל, die folgerichtig in ganz verschiedenen Zusammenhängen begegnet: 22,10 thematisiert damit den Tod Joschijas und das ägyptische Exil seines Sohnes Joahas; nur 48,32 ist eine der in Jer so verbreiteten Katastrophenschilderungen. Diese Merkmale haften offenkundig keiner Gattung an, sondern dem Buch.

Dem entspricht, dass das fragliche Vokabular in Texten gleicher Gattung außerhalb des Buches fehlt, wie eine synoptische Parallele plastisch unterstreicht: Im Moabspruch Kap. 48 stimmen die Vv. 29-33 streckenweise mit Jes 16,6-10 überein, V. 34 hat Gemeinsamkeiten mit Jes 15,4-6 und V. 36 mit Jes 16,11. Dabei weicht die Jer-Version mehrfach mit Formulierungen ab, die in der obigen Liste wiederkehren. 48,30c hat gegenüber Jes 16,6 den Zusatz לֹא־כֵן עָשׂוּ, der die Lieblingswendung לֹא־כֵן benutzt. Jes 16,9 עַל־כֵּן אֶבְכֶּה בִּבְכִי יַעְזֵר ist in V. 32 so abgewandelt, dass בכה ein Präpositionalobjekt mit ל regiert: מִבְּכִי שִׁלֵּחוֹתֶיהָ נִטְּשׁוּ עָבְרוּ יָם 16,8 יַעְזֵר אֶבְכֶּה־לָּךְ. Im selben Vers entspricht die Variante נְטִישׁוֹתַיִךְ עָבְרוּ יָם mit dem Substantiv נְטִישׁוֹת. V. 34 verbindet נָתְנוּ קוֹלָם mit menschlichen Subjekten, wo Jes 15,4 נִשְׁמַע קוֹלָם bietet. Der Kausalsatz in Jes 15,6 כִּי־מֵי נִמְרִים מְשַׁמּוֹת יִהְיוּ erhält in V. 34 die im Buch so beliebte Eröffnung כִּי גַם. Während in Jes 16,11 die Eingeweide (מֵעַי) über Moab dröhnen (המה), ist es in V. 36 das Herz (לִבִּי). All dies bestätigt: Hier liegt kein gattungs-, sondern ein buchtypischer Sprachgebrauch vor, genauer ein solcher, der bestimmte Teilkorpora des Jeremiabuches prägt, ungeachtet der beteiligten Textsorten.

Somit kann das Fazit zwei Resultate festhalten. Erstens haben sich gewisse Teilkorpora des Jeremiabuches vor allem poetischer Natur als stilistisch weit homogener herausgestellt als bisher wahrgenommen. Zweitens sind die einenden sprachlichen Klammern weder als grup-

pentypischer Soziolekt noch als literarische Imitation noch als gattungsbedingte Phänomene erklärbar. So bleibt bloß der Schluss, dass darin ein Idiolekt laut wird, also der unableitbare Tonfall eines einzelnen Autors, der die derart vernetzten Einheiten hervorgebracht hat. Dann entspricht es auch nur der Erwartung, wenn er, als er für seinen Moabspruch aus Jes 15-16 schöpfte, den Anleihen seinen individuellen Stempel aufgedrückt hat.

Die angewandte Kriteriologie ist allerdings so, dass sie lediglich gemeinsame Verfasserschaft erhärten, aber niemals ein konkretes Individuum namhaft machen kann. Ferner wirkt sie nur positiv, insofern sie bei Vorliegen hinreichender Indizien bestimmte Einheiten demselben Urheber zuordnet, während sie über indizienfreie Stücke keine Aussage zulässt. Denn das Fehlen auswertbarer Fingerzeige kann sich zu geringem Umfang, der Themenwahl oder auch bloßem Zufall verdanken; überdies ist die ungerechtfertigte Prämisse zu meiden, ein Mensch müsse immer und überall seinen Idiolekt praktizieren, sodass ein jeder seiner Texte seine eigentümliche stilistische Handschrift trägt. Es ist daher nicht auszuschließen, dass noch weitere Einheiten des Jeremiabuches derselben Feder entstammen. Die Beweiskraft des Materials stößt hier an ihre Grenze. Die nähere Umschreibung des betroffenen Textkorpus und seine Einzelanalyse vorwegnehmend, sei es jedoch erlaubt, mit der rhetorischen Frage zu schließen, wer anderes dieser Autor gewesen sein sollte als der Prophet Jeremia.

Babylon in the Book of Jeremiah (MT): Negotiating a Power Shift

RANNFRID I. THELLE

1. Introduction

Of the 306 mentions of Babylon in the Hebrew Bible, 169 occur in the book of Jeremiah.[1] While the sheer number of references to Babylon itself suggests that Babylon plays a significant role in the book of Jeremiah, exactly how it is significant has not been widely explored. Scholars have consistently pointed out the contradictory attitude toward Babylon in the book. In general, certain parts of Jeremiah, chapters 50-51 in particular, portray Babylon extremely negatively, whereas other parts, particularly chapters 27-29, portray Babylon favorably. Other parts are more ambivalent. Traditional source criticism posed that Jeremiah the prophet was not responsible for the oracle of 50-51, but that it was a later addition.[2] Subsequent attempts to explain the contradiction have followed this lead and have seen the contradictory texts as stemming from different sources,[3] different redactions,[4] or, as a

1 Besides Jeremiah, the greatest concentration of בבל, *Babylon* in the Hebrew Bible is found in 2 Kgs 17, 20 and 24-25, with 30 occurrences. Isaiah has 13 occurrences, Ezekiel a surprisingly few 20, Daniel 16. Ezra has 15 and Nehemiah only 2. 2 Chronicles has 9. The word כשדים, *Chaldean*, appears 78 times in the Bible, of which 53 times are in the book of Jeremiah.

2 Jer 50-51 was neglected as a result. K. BUDDE, Über die Capitel 50 und 51 des Buches Jeremia, Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie 23, 1878, 420-470, 529-562, argued a late date for the chapters. See a summary of this problem and on the early history of research on Jer 50-51 in: D.J. REIMER, The Oracles Against Babylon in Jeremiah 50-51. A Horror among the Nations, San Francisco: Mellem Research University Press, 1993, 1-6.

3 The classic expression of the four main sources of the book of Jeremiah is in S. MOWINCKEL, Zur Komposition des Buches Jeremia, Videnskapsselskapets skrifter II. Hist.-filos. Klasse, 1913, No. 5, Kristiania, Jacob Dybwad, 1914.

4 See W. THIEL, Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25, WMANT 41, Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener Verlag, 1973, and Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 26-45: Mit einer Gesamtbeurteilung der deuteronomistischen Redaktion des Buches Jeremia, WMANT, 52, 1981.

more recent approach, representing different 'voices'.[5] With attempts to read the text synchronically, the contradictions became more troublesome, however, as a synchronic reading seems to accentuate the contradictions.[6]

Though many scholars seem to agree that the book of Jeremiah is 'troubling',[7] 'confusing'[8] and 'incomprehensible',[9] some find 'order amid chaos'[10] in various ways, or attempt 'search for coherence'.[11] The presence of different attitudes toward Babylon is one aspect of the challenge to order that the book of Jeremiah offers. Despite the commendable attempts to see coherence in larger measure, especially in the last 10 years or so, the difficulty to reconcile the King of Babylon, the monster (51:34), with Babylon, the servant of YHWH (Jer 25:9; 27:6; 43:10), which so troubled ROBERT CARROLL, is still present in the material, though it might not be as insurmountable as CARROLL sometimes expressed it.[12] Anyone who reads the book will find that Babylon is described at two opposite ends of a spectrum, within the same book. How can this be understood?

The way in which the writers of Jeremiah have dealt with Babylon is a question that calls for an explanation. Considering the amount of work and effort that has been put into researching the prophetic books as responses to the exile,[13] it is curious that the portrayal of Babylon in

5 M.E. BIDDLE, Polyphony and Symphony in Prophetic Literature Rereading Jeremiah 7-20, Studies in Old Testament Interpretation 2, Macon, GA, Mercer University Press, 1996. In a posthumous article, R. CARROLL suggests the concept of different voices in the book of Jeremiah, in an approach fairly different from that of most of his work, The Polyphonic Jeremiah: A Reading of the Book of Jeremiah, in: M. KESSLER (Ed.), Reading the Book of Jeremiah. A Search for Coherence, Winona, Eisenbrauns, 2004, 77-85.

6 See, for example, R.P. CARROLL, Synchronic Deconstructions of Jeremiah: Diachrony to the Rescue? Reflections on Some Reading Strategies for Understanding Certain Problems in the Book of Jeremiah, in: J.C. De Moor (Ed.), Synchronic or Diachronic? A Debate on Method in Old Testament Exegesis, OTS 34, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1994, 39-51 (46-49).

7 Troubling Jeremiah, Ed. A.R.P. DIAMOND, K.M. O'CONNOR, L. STULMAN, JSOTSup 260, Sheffield, SAP, 1999.

8 R.P. CARROLL, Halfway through a Dark Wood: Reflections of Jeremiah 25 in: Troubling Jeremiah, 73-86 (75).

9 R.P. CARROLL, Jeremiah: A Commentary, OTL, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1986, 38.

10 L. STULMAN, Order Amid Chaos: Jeremiah as Symbolic Tapestry, The Biblical Seminar Series 57, Sheffield, SAP, 1998.

11 M. KESSLER (Ed.), Reading the Book of Jeremiah. A Search for Coherence, 2004.

12 See, for example, R.P. CARROLL, Synchronic Deconstructions of Jeremiah, 46-49.

13 For example O. KAISER's commentary on Isaiah, Isaiah 1-12: A Commentary, Trans. J. BOWDEN, OTL, London, SCM Press, 2nd completely rewritten edn., 1983; K. Jeppe-

the prophetic books has not been more of a subject of rigorous study in this respect. The only monograph-length treatment of Babylon in Jeremiah is JOHN HILL's 1999 book Friend or Foe?, which argues that Babylon functions as an 'organizing metaphor' in the book of Jeremiah, while also referring to something similar to the historical Babylon.[14] HILL's book is an example of how it is possible to read the contradictory portrayals of Babylon as meaningful. This reading shows, among other things, that the book of Jeremiah understands the exile as unended, thus providing a way for subsequent readers of the book to identify as exiles, even when living in 'the land'.[15] Further, it seems that a process is begun in Jeremiah that continues on in later literature, in which Babylon becomes a metaphor or allegory for whichever Empire happens to be the current power, be it Babylon, Persia or Rome. Although no other monograph deals explicitly with Babylon in the book of Jeremiah, there are now a few monographs on the 'oracle against Babylon' in chapters 50-51.[16] In works on Jeremiah in general, depend-

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sen, Græder ikke saa saare: Studier I Mikabogens sigte, 2 vols, Århus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 1987; R.P. CARROLL, Jeremia. OTL; London: SCM Press, 1986); and C.R. SEITZ, Theology in Conflict: Reactions to the Exile in the Book of Jeremiah, BZAW 176, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1989. See also M.A. SWEENEY, Isaiah 1-4 and the Post-Exilic Understanding of the Isaianic Tradition, BZAW 171, Berlin, De Gruyter, 1988.

14 J. HILL, Friend or Foe? The Figure of Babylon in the Book of Jeremiah MT, Biblical Interpretation Series 40, Leiden, Brill, 1999. J. HILL does not consider the narrative of Jeremiah 37-45. While he does not explain why he does not include it in his study, I have thought that it could be because of this section's more history-like style that is reporting the events surrounding the fall of Jerusalem. Especially, perhaps, in chapters 39 and onward. But there do not seem to be any good reasons for leaving out chapters 37-38, in my opinion.

15 A short version of his argument and findings is presented in J. HILL, 'Your Exile Will Be Long': The Book of Jeremiah and the Unended Exile, in: Reading the Book of Jeremiah, 149-161.

16 The first of several recent monographs is D.J. REIMER, The Oracles Against Babylon in Jeremiah 50-51, which is a careful study of the language of these oracles, with some useful conclusions on pp. 257-267, 287-288. A.O. BELLIS did her thesis on Jeremiah 50:1-51:18, published as The Structure and Composition of Jeremiah 50:2-51:58, Leviston, N.Y., Mellen Biblical Press, 1995, and has published a recent article on the history of the figure of Babylon in literature from Jeremiah and Isaiah to Revelations, The Changing Face of Babylon in Prophetic/Apocalyptic Literature: Seventh Century BCE to First Century CE and Beyond, in: L.L. GRABBE and R.D. HAAK (eds.), Knowing the End from the Beginning: The Prophetic, the Apocalyptic and their Relationships, Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 46, London/New York, T&T Clark/Continuum, 2003, 65-73; M. KESSLER, The Battle of the Gods: The God of Israel Versus Marduk of Babylon. A Literary/Theological Interpretation of Jeremiah 50-51, Studia Semitica Neerlandica, Assen, Royal Van Gorcum, 2003, is a culmination of several decades of work on Jeremiah 50-51 and

ing on the reading strategy chosen (such as diachronic or synchronic), and depending on which methodology is employed, the attention given by scholars to Babylon, if any, tends to reflect their overall understanding of the book, or of theological issues.[17]

In my exploration of Babylon in the book of Jeremiah, I am very often in line with J. HILL's analysis. However, I will also be looking beyond the world of the text, and applying some of those insights to a hypothesis about the composition of prophetic books. For this endeavour, I have been most inspired by MICHAEL FLOYD's broad and flexible proposal about the conditions under which prophetic books were written.[18] The present article will follow the lead of his proposal in viewing the book of Jeremiah as a piece of writing that is the result of work done by the writing class in early Persian period Judah, working out the experience of the exile and the collapse of the Judean monarchy by drawing on 'prophetic tradition', and through this activity, producing a prophetic book.

The first part of the article will consist of a description of the texts that deal with Babylon. After this, a summary of scholarly views about the production of prophetic books will be followed by a final section where I will go on to explore how a focus on Babylon can highlight the dynamics of the process whereby the book of Jeremiah negotiates a shift of power that de-centers Judah. The focus on Babylon and its function in the book of Jeremiah, can help demonstrate the negotiation of a shift from Jerusalem as the point of correspondence between the divine realm and the earthly realm, to the construction of a 'bipolar axis mundi', where Jerusalem is one pole and Babylon/the imperial center is the other. I will do this by considering the dynamics of the portrayal of the kings of Judah and the king of Babylon.

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matters of structure in the book of Jeremiah. This book contains a detailed, though somewhat inconsistent, history of research of Jeremiah 50-51, pp. 13-35. Also a foundational study on the Oracles Against the Nations in the book of Jeremiah, though it does not concern Jeremiah 50-51, is B. HUWYLER, Jeremia und die Völker: Untersuchungen zu den Völkersprüchen in Jeremia 46-49, FAT, 20, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1997.

17 Most scholars writing on Jeremiah deal with Babylon as a reference to the historical Babylon, and deal with it accordingly, with a focus on dating of events and texts. For a more holistic or theological approach, see, for instance, L. STULMAN, Order amid Chaos; and W. BRUGGEMAN, At the Mercy of Babylon: A Subversive Rereading of the Empire, in: Reading the Book of Jeremiah, 117-134.

18 M.H. FLOYD, The Production of Prophetic Books, in: M.H. FLOYD and R.D. HAAK (eds.), Prophets, Prophecy and Prophetic Texts in Second Temple Judaism, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies, 427, New York, T & T Clark, 2006, 276-297.

2. Babylon in the Book of Jeremiah (MT)

בבל appears a total of 169 times in the book of Jeremiah MT.[19] The first 19 chapters of Jeremiah do not mention Babylon.[20] The occurrences cluster in certain portions of the book, and the survey of Babylon will be organized according to these clusters. The first is in chapters 20-24 and in the transitional chapter 25, then in a major section in chapters 27-29 (33x). Significant mentions are found in 32 and 34, a single mention each in 35:11 and 36:29. The extended composition of Jer 37-44 has 32 occurrences. The oracles against the nations in 46-51 have an astounding 79, with the decidedly most frequent occurrences in Jer 50-51 (74).[21] Finally, the closing chapter 52 has 15.

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19 In general, Babylon is emphasized more in the MT than in the LXX. This paper is a study of the Massoretic Text of the book of Jeremiah. As is well known, there are major differences between the various textual traditions of the book of Jeremiah. The Septuagint translation is about 1/8 shorter than the MT and has a different ordering, with the Oracles to the Nations following chapter 25:13. These are the two major differences. Two main theories about the relationship between these two texts exist among scholars, the first represented mainly by the work of EMANUEL TOV, who thinks that there is one book of Jeremiah. The Greek translation represents an earlier stage of the Hebrew text than that represented by the MT, and an earlier Hebrew *Vorlage* can be reconstructed from the LXX. The other position is that there was more than one tradition of the book of Jeremiah in circulation, and that the LXX represents a different tradition than the MT.

I fall in with those who find it difficult to prove the primacy of one tradition over the other, and prefer to allow the possibility of several flexible textual traditions coexisting with each other. In this situation, I have chosen to study what we label as the MT tradition. That having been said, it is quite clear that Babylon has a more pronounced position in the MT than in the LXX.

See S. SODERLUND, The Greek Text of Jeremiah, Sheffield, SAP, 1985, for a description of the main positions in the question of the relationship between the LXX and MT. E. TOV's work is most easily accessed in the collection of his most important articles in: The Greek and Hebrew Bible: Collected Essays on the Septuagint, VTSup 72, Leiden, Brill, 1999, see especially: The Literary History of the book of Jeremiah in Light of Its Textual History, 333-384. For an argument for the idea of two distinct textual traditions, see H.J. STIPP, Das masoretische und alexandrinische Sondergut des Jeremiabuches: textgeschichtlicher Rang, Eigenarten, Triebkräfte, OBO 136, Freiburg, Universitätsverlag Schweiz/Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994.

20 The boiling pot in Jer 1:13 and the disaster that will break out of the north in 1:14 have been interpreted as referring to Babylon. Likewise, the 'foe from the north' in chapter 4-6 has also been interpreted by many as referring to Babylon. This paper will not be considering these texts in detail, since the point of departure is the concrete references to Babylon.

21 D.J. REIMER catalogues lists of divergences between the LXX and the MT in Jeremiah 50-51 (REIMER, The Oracles, 1993, 115-117), and concludes his careful survey and discussion with the finding that the nature of the differences between the two textual

מלך בבל is the most frequent compound with בבל (89).[22] J. HILL speaks about how these references should be understood metonymically to refer to Babylon through reference to the king (Friend or Foe?, 17). I think the choice of the king as the metonymic reference underscores the paradigm of prophecy as understood by FLOYD, in that the earthly king corresponds to the heavenly king (the deity) at a specific point on earth. In this paradigm, geopolitical references have meaning within the world view that prophecy relies on.

All other compounds with *Babylon*:פסילי בבל, ישבי בבל, חומת בבל, גבורי בבל, בת בבל, ארץ בבל, תוך בבל, occur within Jeremiah 50-51, this section thus being the most varied in its use of Babylon. The word כשׂדים appears 47 times in the book of Jeremiah. Combinations with כשׂדים include ישבי כשׂדים, יד הכשׂדים, ארץ כשׂדים and פני הכשׂדים, and appear scattered throughout the book.

Jeremiah 20-24

The first mention of Babylon occurs in Jer 20:4-6. The context is an oracle of judgment spoken by Jeremiah against the priest Pashur on the morning of his release from the stocks. Pashur had locked the prophet up for a night on the temple premises, for having pronounced disaster on the city of Jerusalem. Pashur overhears Jeremiah speaking in '… the court of the house of YHWH', hits him and locks him up. The prophet then utters his oracle of judgment.

According to the word of YHWH, Pashur and all his friends will be *given into the hands of the king of Babylon*; Babylon is the place they will be *exiled to*. The spoils of the city *will be carried off to Babylon*. Babylon is in this text introduced as the place to be sent to as punishment, a place to be sent into exile, a place to come to as captives, to die. The 'king of Babylon' signifies the same thing; he is someone to be given over to, by YHWH, and stands parallel with 'enemies' (Jer 20:5). Babylon becomes

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traditions is not systematic, but random, something that 'should make scholars cautious when speaking of 'recensions', 'editions' and 'editor(s)', p. 153.

CAROLYN J. SHARP has analyzed all of the LXX variants in Jer 50-51 and concludes that the book of Jeremiah itself admits to and gives authority to two separate existing tradition in Jer 36, 'Take Another Scroll and Write': A Study of the LXX and the MT of Jeremiah's Oracles against Egypt and Babylon, VT 47, 1997, 487-516.

22 Jer 20:4; 21:2, 4, 7, 10; 22:25; 24:1; 25:1, 9, 11, 12; 27:6, 8*bis*, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 20; 28:2, 3, 4, 11, 14; 29:3, 21, 22; 32:2, 3, 4, 28, 36; 34:1, 2, 3, 7, 21; 35:11; 36:29; 37:1, 17, 19; 38:3, 17, 18, 22, 23; 39:1, 3*bis*, 5, 6*bis*, 11, 13; 40:5, 7, 9, 11; 41:2, 18; 42:11; 43:10; 44:30; 46:2, 3, 26 ; 49:28, 30; 50:17, 18, 43; 51:31, 34; 52:3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12*bis*, 15, 26, 27, 31, 34.

identified with the judgment of YHWH, the place of future punishment and death and a place of exile.[23]

In Jer 21:1-7, the threat of punishment in the previous chapter is given a specific setting. There is a jump forward in time, we assume, to the reign of Zedekiah, the last of the kings of Judah and the last king with whom Jeremiah interacts.[24] We note that the first time that an oracle of Jeremiah is dated it is an oracle addressed to Zedekiah, with whom he will have many altercations throughout the book of Jeremiah. Jer 21:1 begins by introducing the following as the 'the word that came (happened) to Jeremiah from YHWH', הדבר אשר־היה אל־ירמיהו מאת יהוה.[25] The occasion is that a royal delegation has been sent to Jeremiah to inquire YHWH on their behalf, because 'Nebuchadrezzar, King of Babylon, is making war against [them]'. The hope is that YHWH perhaps will perform a wonderful deed (נפלאת) usually interpreted to refer to the delivery from the siege of Jerusalem during the time of Hezekiah, and save them. Their request for help is perfectly *un*-extraordinary, which makes the answer they are to take back to the king just that much more devastating.

In the oracle the delegation is instructed to take back to Zedekiah, YHWH says that he will disarm Zedekiah's army and he will gather them (the weapons or the Babylonians) in the center of the city. YHWH himself will fight against his people and strike them down, even the animals. Then, YHWH says, he will give the survivors, including the king, over to Nebuchadrezzar, who will finish them off. In this text, YHWH is like a traitor. He will take away their weapons and turn on his people. It is not even a case of using Nebuchadrezzar as a tool; YHWH is doing the job for him! Nebuchadrezzar only gets to slaughter the survivors after YHWH is done. In this text, YHWH positions himself entirely on the side of the enemy, and that enemy is Babylon. Babylon, represented metonymically by its king, is identified as the

23 Babylon as the place of exile, and the motif of YHWH's punishment in the form of being given into the hands of the king of Babylon occurs also elsewhere in the Bible: 2 Kgs 20:17-19 (oracle); 24:2-4 (narrative), 24:11-16 (narrative); 25 (narrative); Ezek 12:10-16 (oracle); 17:11-21 (seems to be about Zedekiah, though he is not named).

24 Jeremiah 2-20 does not give introductions placing these oracles in chronological time. Jer 21:1 mentions Zedekiah, which puts the oracle within a time frame. This text is also the first of several instances of a royal delegation appearing before Jeremiah to inquire on behalf of the king. The Pashhur of this text is not the same one as in Jeremiah 20, but it is striking that the same name is used, particularly when attention has been called to it in 20:3 when Jeremiah tells him his name will be changed from Pashur to Magor (terror).

25 This introduction is also found in Jer 7:1; 11:1; 18:1; 21:1; 25:1 (without מאת יהוה); 30:1; 32:1; 34:1.8; 35:1; 40:1.

power which brings disaster on Judah, consistent with Jeremiah 20. In both cases, unconditional judgment is pronounced on the king of Judah, and the means of bringing it about is Babylon.[26]

The oracle does go on, however, and in addition to this speech of judgment on the king, the delegation is told to tell the *people* that they have a choice of two ways: the way of life and the way of death (Jer 21:8-10).[27] Here, Babylon is tied to the way of life; those who surrender shall win their lives as a prize of war. This oracle introduces the theme of what is often called the pro-Babylonian rhetoric in the book of Jeremiah, and to which we shall return below.[28]

It is significant to note at this point that it is the *people* who are given a choice of surrendering to the Chaldeans or staying in Jerusalem and facing death. The king receives unconditional judgment and will be captured and killed (Jer 21:7). The text continues in Jer 21:11 with another oracle against the king of Judah. This text is focused on justice, a theme that continues into Jeremiah 22 with oracles against various kings of Judah (Shallum, Jehoiakim, Coniah). The unconditional punishment on the kings is again tied specifically to Babylon in Jer 22:24-30:[29] in an oracle of judgment against Coniah (Jehoiakin). His lineage is condemned, he will not return to his land and his offspring will not rule again in Judah. It is absolutely clear from the texts examined thus far, that Babylon represents the place of exile, punishment and the end of the royal house. For the people however, the idea of a choice has been presented in Jer 21:8-10, and this theme of two different fates continues in Jeremiah 24.

In a vision dated after the deportation of Jehoiakin to Babylon, along with the leaders of Judah, Jeremiah is shown two baskets of figs in front of the temple. One basket has good figs, the other so bad that they cannot be eaten. YHWH asks Jeremiah what he sees, and he describes it. Then YHWH speaks to him, comparing to the good figs the

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26 A crucial result of JOHN HILL's analysis is the demonstration of how chapter 20, in particular, names Babylon as the figure that brings on the judgment of Judah in a way that functions as an 'organizing metaphor' in Jer 2-20. This portion of Jeremiah is mainly characterized by oracles of judgment pronouncing disaster and destruction on Judah, but the oracles do not specify the agent of the disaster, except that it will come from YHWH. Jeremiah 20 especially, serves to identify Babylon with YHWH's punishment of Judah, and is thus to be understood as an 'organizing metaphor' for the first part of the book of Jeremiah, see HILL, Friend or Foe?, 55-71.

27 Much like the choice Moses gave the people in an earlier generation in Deut 30.

28 Though much more subtle, an idea suggesting that the exile into Babylon is also the place of rescue can be found in Mic 4:10.

29 See J. SCHIPPER, 'Exile Atones for Everything': Coping with Jeremiah 22.24-30, JSOT 31/4, 2007, 465-480.

people who are exiles, saying he will regard them as good. They are promised restoration and care (Jer 24:5-7), and return from exile. The bad figs are compared to the way in which YHWH will treat Zedekiah and his royal entourage, those who remain in the land and those who live in Egypt. They will be treated badly wherever they end up, and they will be completely destroyed.

This chapter lines up with the choice of the two ways in Jer 21:8-10 in terms of what is considered the way of life and the way of death. However the people do not have a choice in the case of the vision in Jer 24. They are either in the good or the bad category, and there is no reference to any actions they have chosen.[30] The idea that Babylon and the place of exile is *good*, is consistent, however.

Jeremiah 25

Jeremiah 25 is significant to the structure of the book. Jeremiah 25 starts with an elaborate introduction describing the word that came to Jeremiah to all the people of Judah (Jer 25:1-2). The time reference means going back in time compared to the previous chapter, to the fourth year of Jehoiakim, son of Josiah of Judah. Further, this year is identified as the first year of the king of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, a reference that is missing in the Septuagint. This is very significant, and we will return to this observation in the discussion in Part III, below. Further, the message is specified as spoken by Jeremiah *the prophet* (also missing in the Septuagint), and addressed to all the people of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. This address evokes Jer 2:1, tying Jeremiah 25 back to the beginning of the book.[31]

Jer 25:3-7 summarizes the work that Jeremiah has done over the last 23 years, according to the text, speaking the word of YHWH. The verdict is that the people have not listened. Therefore, continues Jer 25:8, YHWH will destroy Judah, and he will do so with the help of 'King

30 Maybe this is part of the theodicy. The people do not really have a choice in what happens to them. So to a certain extent they are not really to blame for their fate. The message about who YHWH considers favorably, however, is not in doubt.

31 The structuring function of Jeremiah 25 has been noted by most interpreters. See, e.g., M. KESSLER, The Function of Chapters 25 and 50-51 in the Book of Jeremiah, in: Troubling Jeremiah, 64-72; J. HILL, The Construction of Time in Jeremiah 25 (MT), in: the same volume, 146-160, shows how the fourth year of Jehoiakim is a metaphor for judgment in Jeremiah, and how the temporal distance between 605 and 587 is collapsed in this chapter; further on this in his Friend or Foe?, 89-126; R.P. CARROLL, Halfway through a Dark Wood: Reflections of Jeremiah 25, in: Troubling Jeremiah, 73-86, points out several of the irresolvable tensions in the book of Jeremiah.

Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, [his] servant'.[32] The whole land will be devastated, and the land will serve the king of Babylon. The oracle can be read as a culmination of Jer 2-24. This section corresponds in many ways to the type of texts we have looked at so far, as a divine speech of judgment. The text goes on, however, to prophesy punishment on Babylon. In the future, Jeremiah announces, everything that has been 'uttered against it, everything written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations', will happen to Babylon (Jer 25:12-14). Jer 25 here points forward to the end of the book, to the judgment on Babylon.

A new section, with instructions about symbolic action and the narration of the performance, begins in Jer 25:15. In Jer 25:15-16 YHWH tells Jeremiah to take a cup of wine of wrath, and make all the nations drink it. In the following verses, a sort of universal judgment is envisioned, on a completely different scale from 25:3-14. Beginning with Jerusalem and Judah, all nations are mentioned, ending with Babylon (or Sheshach, the cryptogram for Babel). The whole world stands under judgment here, and the expansion in 25:28-38 involves the whole world and its judgment under YHWH more akin to the type of prophecies involving a great slaughter not related to a specific historical setting in the way that Jer 25:3-14 is.

In brief, Jeremiah 25, with its significant position in the book of Jeremiah, includes both the idea of a specific, historically imagined judgment on Judah brought about by Babylon, followed by a period of Babylonian hegemony that is limited in time and that will end with Babylon's demise as a historical entity, *and* a vision of a more mythical judgment on the whole world. The structure of Jer 25 mirrors the organization of the book as a whole: first judgment on Israel and Judah, then the nations and finally Babylon, a mysterious, non-historical Babylon that could refer to any superpower that deserves this 'privileged' position.

To summarize, in Jeremiah 21-25 Babylon is identified with YHWH's judgment on Judah. These chapters focus the thrust from chapters 2-20. Chapter 25 also points forward. Time references are

32 Elsewhere in the book of Jeremiah MT, Nebuchadrezzar is referred to as 'servant' in 27:6 and 43:10. The Sinaiticus of the LXX does not contain this reference to 'servant'. My own position, for the purposes of this article, is to analyze the MT. For a summary representation of the text critical issues, views of various commentators and the texts of different LXX traditions, see W. McKane, Jeremiah, Vol. II, pp. 688-689 and text critical notes in: G.L. Keown, *et al*, Jeremiah 26-52, Word Biblical Commentary 27, Dallas, TX, Word Books, 1995, 41-43. See also T. Overholt, Nebuchadrezzar in the Jeremiah Tradition, CBQ 30, 1968, 30-48, especially 42-43; Hill, Friend or Foe?, 113-117, 135-136.

given in chapters 21-25 that emphasize specific events: the fourth year of Jehoiakim, the deportation of Jehoiakin, and the siege at the time of Zedekiah. These are the core events during the time of Jeremiah the prophet, marking the beginning of the end, and the final catastrophe itself. The beginning of judgment, identified with the fourth year of Jehoiakim, is also clearly designated as the first year of Nebuchadrezzar.

While judgment on Judah in chapters 2-19 is general in nature, in 21-25 the judgment is more specifically on the kings and leaders, while the people are given a choice (in chap. 21 especially). There is also a difference between the positive evaluation of the exiles and the negative attitude toward those who stayed behind or fled to Egypt (Jer 24). In addition, these chapters express the belief that YHWH wants a surrender to the Babylonians (e.g. Jer 21:8-10, and below, Jer 27). In the case of Jeremiah 24, this is a sort of programmatic statement, whereas 21:8-10 and Jer 27 are cases of YHWH urging certain behavior. According to 2 Kgs 25:11, all the people in the city of Jerusalem were carried into exile, together with those who had defected to the king of Babylon. No difference is made between groups there.

Jeremiah 27-29

References to Babylon do not occur in Jeremiah 26. However, this chapter is significant in terms of showing what the writers of Jeremiah understood to be the correct attitude toward prophecy and how to respond to prophets. It also frames the next section of the book of Jeremiah. This narrative portion of the book is concerned with Jeremiah's efforts to convince his audience that Jerusalem will be destroyed and that they should submit to the Babylonians. This section also focuses on the theme of 'true' vs. 'false' prophecy, which is a topic I have treated more in depth elsewhere.[33] In the present article, the analysis of chapters 27-29 will highlight the role of the kings of Judah and Babylon, and focus on Babylon and its significance.

Jeremiah 27 opens with a date reference. Most scholars agree that it is supposed to be set in Zedekiah's reign and that the reference to Jehoiakim in 27:1 is a mistake. In this chapter, the message of submission to the king of Babylon is preached not just to Judah, but to all

33 In R.I. THELLE, Jeremiah MT: Reflections of a Discourse on Prophecy in the Persian Period, in: D.V. EDELMAN and E. BEN ZVI (eds.), The Creation of Biblical Prophecy. Constructing Prophecy and Prophets in Yehud, BibleWorld, London: Equinox, Forthcoming 2009.

the surrounding kingdoms, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon. Jeremiah calls together the emissaries of these countries and instructs them to bring the message to their masters, from YHWH. They are to serve the king of Babylon and put their necks under his yoke, otherwise they will be punished by YHWH through the hand of Nebuchadrezzar. They are also warned not to listen to their own prophets, who are prophesying lies.

The portrayal of Babylon's King Nebuchadrezzar is of utmost interest here. YHWH begins by introducing himself as YHWH Zebaoth, God of Israel (Jer 27:4). He then goes on to present himself as the creator and ultimate ruler of the earth. He has created it and everything in it, and 'will give it to he whom is right in [his] eyes', (Jer 27:5). He then goes on to declare that he has decided to give all of this land to *Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, his servant*. In effect, this text relates the divine election of Nebuchadrezzar. He is given all creation, like Adam; he is going to help YHWH devastate 'the land' as his servant, like Joshua; and he is the king who is right in the eyes of YHWH, like David.[34]

Another interesting point in this context is the promise that a nation who surrenders to Babylon and agrees to serve him, will be left on its own land (Jer 27:11). The message to King Zedekiah of Judah is given in Jer 27:12-15; it repeats the call to lay his neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon and to serve him, in order to live. It does not say that they will be sent into exile. But if Zedekiah listens to prophets who tell him not to serve the king of Babylon, he will be *driven out* and will *die*. Jeremiah 27 reminds us of Jeremiah 21, which gave the choice between the way of life and the way of death, where life was won by surrendering to the Babylonians. In this chapter, Babylon is the 'way out' offered to the king if he wants to listen to the prophet and avoid death. The 'way of life' involves giving in to the king of Babylon. Ironically, giving up sovereignty will allow the king to stay on the land. Letting the land be someone else's is the way to staying in your land.[35]

This call for Zedekiah's 'abdication' in Jer 27:12-15 in favor of the king of Babylon is interesting in light of MICHAEL FLOYD's theory about the impact of specific changes on prophecy. When a world order *changes*, this change has consequences for prophecy. The world view of the Ancient Near East, including Israel, consisted of a heaven and an earth with communication going on between the king of the earthly realm and the king of the heavenly realm, through religious experts

34 See J. HILL's great analysis of this chapter, in: Friend or Foe?, 129-144.

35 CARROLL, Halfway through a Dark Wood, 80.

such as prophets, priests and other functionaries. In ancient Israel, YHWH was the king of the heavenly realm, and the Davidic king of Judah was the representative of the earthly realm. When the king of Judah was removed and the power transferred to Babylon, prophecy and the general understanding of communication between the heavenly and the earthly were affected. In a further discussion below, the dynamic between the king of Babylon and the king of Judah in the book of Jeremiah will be considered in light of the ideas stemming from FLOYD's work on prophecy.

Jer 27:16-22 is an oracle to the priests and to all the people, focusing on the vessels of the temple and their fate, as a symbol of the fate of the city. This section is concerned with 'false', or 'lying' (שׁקר), prophecy, and with making clear what the writers of the book of Jeremiah considered to be the wrong message. Throughout the chapter, there is the exhortative thrust to convince the audience that the prophecy that the king of Babylon will be the one in power is the *correct* prophecy. As a contrast to the accusation that the people did not listen to Jeremiah, the focus is here on *not listening* to the prophets who bring the wrong message (27:9, 14, 16, 17).

Jeremiah 28 picks up the theme of lying prophecy by giving a concrete instance of what was warned against in the preceding text. It continues to reflect on how to evaluate which prophetic utterances were true (Jer 28:9). In the last part of the chapter, after the story of Hananiah's prophecy, Jeremiah receives an oracle that is almost identical to the one he utters in Jer 27:5-7 to the emissaries of the surrounding kingdoms. Also, Jeremiah tells Hananiah that he will die within the year because he has caused the people to believe in a lie. Hananiah does die.

In some ways, this narrative of the confrontation between Jeremiah and Hananiah recalls 1 Kings 22 with the prophets of Ahab against Micaiah ben Imlah. The differences are many, however, including the stereotypical setting before the kings, which is missing in Jeremiah. The king of Judah is not clearly on the scene in Jeremiah 28. The two prophets are described as speaking to each other 'in the presence of the priests and all the people' (Jer 28:1, 5). In both cases, however, it is a public 'contest'.

Even though the main thrust of chapters 27-28 is concerned with the correct understanding of prophecy and who is a truthful prophet, the subject matter of the prophecies is concerned with Babylon, and it is a point of these chapters to show that Jeremiah's message about submitting to Babylon was the *correct* message. This close connection between the theme of correct vs. lying prophecy and the theme of the

'good message about submitting to Babylon' is significant in terms of understanding how the book of Jeremiah might have been created. The idea that prophetic books were produced by scribes who saw themselves as custodians of the prophetic tradition in the late exilic/post exilic period finds support in chapters 27-28, which clearly reflect and elaborate on these problematics.

Chapter 29 can also be seen in this light. This chapter carries on the theme of lying prophecy, though formally the main message of the opening of the chapter is that the exiles should settle for some time in Babylon. Towards the end of the chapter, the theme of the correct vs. lying prophecy takes over completely, and being 'against' Babylon is viewed as insurrection against YHWH.

The chapter opens by introducing the following as contents of a letter (ספר) that Jeremiah the prophet sends to the exiled community. The time reference given is 'the time after Jeconiah the king … had been exiled…'. Significantly, the letter is sent by Jeremiah from Jerusalem (29:1), and carried by two sons of scribes, Elasaha son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah, whom *Zedekiah king of Judah had sent to Babylon to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon* (29:3). This is thus considered an official delegation sent by Zedekiah to Nebuchadrezzar. We as readers are told the content of this letter, but there is no narration of it actually being read *to* the exiled community itself, or that Zedekiah knew of the details of the letter.

The main point of interest in our context is that the message of the letter is that the exiled community should live and prosper in Babylon, even pray for its welfare (29:4-7). Babylon is the place of YHWH's *shalom*. The call to build, plant, marry, and pray recall similar ideas about the ideal existence in *the land* (e.g. Deut 20:5-8; 28:30; Isa 65:21-23). JOHN HILL shows through his fine analysis that in this text, Judah and Babylon become identified with each other.[36]

But it is equally clear in the text that this is a temporary situation. Jer 29:10-14 speak about restoration to the land after Babylon's seventy years are over. Then, once again, YHWH will hear the prayers of the people after having refused them earlier (in Jer 7, 11, and 14). These verses represent the long term message to the exiled community, in which Babylon is the place *from which* they will return.

To summarize, chapters 27-29 contain some of the most 'pro-Babylonian' rhetoric in the book of Jeremiah. In chapter 27, the king of Babylon is described in terms of the most privileged Judean king, as YHWH's servant, as the one to whom is given all of creation, much like

36 HILL, Friend or Foe?, 146-153; same author, 'Your Exile Will Be Long', 149-152.

Adam in the Eden-story. It is as if a transfer of power from the king of Judah to the king of Babylon is upheld as a right and good development. This is a complete reversal of the good life in the land. Chapter 28 deals with how the message of giving in to the Babylonians should be received and how it was received. This chapter deals with the understanding of the role of prophecy in the experience of the fall of Jerusalem and the exile to Babylon. Chapter 29 paints a picture of some duration of the stay in Babylon, and describes life in Babylon in terms of the ideal life in the land. As a whole, these chapters are clear about what Jeremiah's message is: give in to Babylon. Babylon is a place of exile that can be good, and is a place from which the community eventually will return.

Jeremiah 32-35

Babylon is not mentioned in chapters 30-31; however, these chapters do shed light on the issue of how to work out the problems of prophecy in the time of no king. Chapter 30-31 might have been composed on the basis of well-known prophetic motifs of restoration and promise. Jer 30:8 introduces promises of restoration, including motifs such as the breaking of a yoke (recalling Jeremiah 27), and Israel as the servant of YHWH their God and David their king (a ruler shall be of their own, 30:21) rather than being a servant of strangers. There are several points of correspondence to the earlier part of the book here. For example 30:16 as reversing 2:3, the motif of devouring those who devour Israel, representing a return to an earlier stage of innocence, and other scenes of reversal of fortune.

The two most interesting chapters for our context are 32 and 34, both of which deal with King Zedekiah.[37] In Jer 32:1 there is a skip in time again compared to the last dating (Jer 29:1; just after Jehoiakin's exile). It is the tenth year of Zedekiah, the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar; the army of the king of Babylon is besieging Jerusalem and the prophet Jeremiah is imprisoned in the palace of the king by Zedekiah. The setting is identical to the earlier episode of Jeremiah 21, in terms of the Babylonian siege, as we also find in the later set of narratives involving Jeremiah and Zedekiah in Jeremiah 34 and 37-38. However, in this second instance of several (see 25:2), where the reign of the king of Judah is coordinated with the reign of the Babylonian king, in Jer 32 it is stated very clearly that Jeremiah is working in the time of King

37 References to Babylon occur in 32:2, 3, 4, 28, 36; 34:1, 2, 3, 7, 21; 35:11.

Nebuchadrezzar. His message is all but introduced as 'The word that came to Jeremiah during the reign of Nebuchadrezzar, when the king of Babylon and all his people were fighting against Jerusalem'. One could have added: 'And Jeremiah was imprisoned by the besieged king Zedekiah'.

The word of YHWH that is introduced in 32:1 is described as being a response to something Zedekiah has said. It is not clear when he said it or how Jeremiah hears it. However, Zedekiah's message is a direct challenge to Jeremiah's previous preaching. As opposed to Jer 21, where the king sends a delegation to Jeremiah in the hope of receiving a message about a miraculous rescue, and also distinct from the episodes of 37 and 38 where they meet face to face, this time Jeremiah is responding to a kind of rhetorical rebuttal. King Zedekiah is reported to have said,

> Why do you prophesy and say: Thus says YHWH: I am going to give this city into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall take it; King Zedekiah of Judah shall not escape out of the hands of the Chaldeans, but shall surely be given into the hands of the king of Babylon, and shall speak with him face to face and see him eye to eye; and he shall take Zedekiah to Babylon, and there he shall remain until I attend to him, says YHWH; though you fight against the Chaldeans, you shall not succeed, (32:3-5).

Zedekiah does not get an answer to his question. Jeremiah's divine speech goes on to report another word of YHWH. But there are several points to note before we turn to Jeremiah's response. First of all, if Jeremiah had brought the message Zedekiah is quoting, it has not been shared with the readers of the book. The message concerning Jerusalem and its fate is consistent with the previous messages that occur together with a pronouncement about the fate of Zedekiah (e.g. Jer 21:4-6; 25:8-10; 27:13). However, Zedekiah's rendering of the message about his own fate in 32:3-5 does not correspond to the previous messages, and is also at odds with subsequent versions. For example, in 21:7 Zedekiah will be killed by the sword, in 34:21-22 and 37:7 he will definitely be captured, in 24:8-10 he will be driven away, and be exposed to sword famine and pestilence. In 34:4-5 it says clearly that he will not die by the sword (see on this text immediately below), and in 38:14-23 (like 21:9-10), there is a conditional pronouncement providing a way to avoid punishment. Particularly interesting is the contrast between the detail in 32:4 that Zedekiah and Nebuchadrezzar will see eye to eye, and the report in Jer 39 and 52 and 2 Kgs 25 that his eyes were gouged out after his sons had been killed in front of him. The diverging pronouncements on Zedekiah's future are an intriguing feature of the book of Jeremiah and also impinges on the role of Babylon and the picture of Nebuchad-

rezzar that emerges. A further discussion will follow in the last section of this article.

Turning back to Jeremiah in chap. 32, at the most hopeless hour, the answer Jeremiah receives from YHWH is instruction to buy a field. Zedekiah's challenge about the word of YHWH (Jer 32:3-5) is met by the act of buying land. And Jeremiah confirms this in his prayer, set somehow in the future, in Jer 32:16-25, 'What you spoke has happened, as you yourself can see. Yet you, O YHWH God, have said to me, "Buy the field for money and get witnesses" – though the city has been given into the hands of the Chaldeans', (vv. 24-25). As if this is not clear enough, it is followed by another oracle of judgment proclaiming disaster because of idolatry, (Jer 32:26-35). This is, however, followed by an oracle of restoration, of the return of the people from all the countries to which YHWH had driven them, and the promise of an everlasting covenant in vv. 36-44. Jer 32:43-44 makes the explicit connection between the promised future restoration and the buying of land.

A similar juxtaposing of a text describing behavior seemingly irreconcilable with an oracle of judgment is found in Jeremiah 34. The setting is similarly described as chap. 32, but Jeremiah is not said to be in prison, and YHWH commands him to go and speak to Zedekiah. The message that Babylon will conquer Jerusalem is followed by another pronouncement on Zedekiah, this one quite positive, and almost completely opposite to the harsh judgment of Jer 21:7. Zedekiah will be captured and brought to Babylon, and see the king eye to eye, but he will not die by the sword but die in peace and have a decent burial (Jer 34:4-5). This oracle, which can be seen as a self-contained episode, is followed by a divine speech delivered by Jeremiah after the house of Zedekiah fails to practice the law of manumission correctly. It becomes another occasion for the prophet to proclaim the infidelity of the people and pronounce punishment. The announcement of 34:22 includes a comment on Zedekiah, that he will be handed over to his enemies, the Babylonians, even though they have seemingly withdrawn. His fate is vague in this text, but it is, yet again, quite clear that YHWH is with Babylon and against his city, and that Jerusalem will be destroyed.

Chapters 32 and 34 are in tension with one another. Chapter 34 serves to bring readers back to the gloomier mood of the book, which has temporarily been lifted and deflected by the promise of a more hopeful future. Jer 32 seems to offer an option for conceiving of the future following Babylonian conquest. Following the two chapters of 30-31 that center on future restoration and hope and with the similarly hopeful chapter 33, the proclaimed disaster in 32 and 34 is given a

context that includes the hope for a future restoration. In the midst of proclaimed disaster and the imminent threat of destruction, hope for the future is upheld and promised. The confusion created by the positive prophecy about Zedekiah's death in peace in Jer 34:5 also contributes to this effect. The negative prophecy at the end of chap. 34 brings the reader back to the mood of judgment, and chapter 35 reinforces that feeling by bringing the dating back to the 'days of King Jehoiakim, son of Josiah of Judah'. The narrative about the Rechabites highlights Judah's disobedience, lack of hearing, and juxtaposes the correct response of the Rechabites to the threat posed by King Nebuchadrezzar (35:11) with the obstinacy of the Judahites.

Jeremiah 36

Jeremiah 36 then brings the dating to that year of judgment, the fourth year of Jehoiakim. In this year, Jeremiah writes down all of the warnings, so that Israel might change its ways. After it has been dictated it is sent to be read by Baruch in the temple. So, even though he is barred from speaking there, Jeremiah's words of judgment are heard by the people (Jer 36:5-7). The following year, Baruch reads the scroll before a group of pilgrims and temple staff, who bring it before the king. The king is not moved, but simply burns the scroll as it is read, and orders the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch. There is unfortunately no room for any comment on this narrative in the present context. I will restrict myself to this summary in order to bring us to the message of YHWH to Jeremiah after the burning of the scroll.

As a part of YHWH's word to Jeremiah (Jer 36:27-31), he is instructed to take another scroll and write down everything that was on the first scroll that Jehoiakim burnt,

> And concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah you shall say: Thus says the LORD, You have dared to burn this scroll, saying, Why have you written in it that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and will cut off from it human beings and animals? Therefore thus says the LORD concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah: He shall have no one to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat by day and the frost by night. (Jer 36:29-30)

This text does not really tell us anything new about Babylon that we do not as readers know by now. The divine speech puts words in the mouth of King Jehoiakim that become the grounds for his punishment. The punishment is in line with the fate he is prophesied in Jer 22:19. And, as we are told, the king's rejection of the message does not keep it from being recorded again.

Jeremiah 37-44

Jeremiah 37-44 tells the story of the end of the Judean monarchy, the capture of Jerusalem by Babylonian forces, the aftermath of the destruction, the fate of the first Babylonian imperial administration, those who remained in the land, and their final flight to Egypt. Jeremiah the prophet plays a role in all sections except in the civil war and the assassination of Gedaliah. I have found it useful both to recognize the textual markers in Jer 36 and 45 (both containing references to Baruch and the scroll he writes), and to see breaks within the text of 37-44 that seem to divide the text into portions.[38] Though there are several differing views among scholars about the identity of the authors of this section of the book of Jeremiah, I find it difficult to accept the various premises necessary to argue for a certain provenance or purpose, and therefore choose to see this portion no differently than other parts of the prophetic traditions that the writers of the book of Jeremiah drew upon to produce the book.[39]

In the focus on Babylon that this article is implementing, this section differs from most others in that here Babylon is more directly a *subject*. This is a narrative about Babylon's dealings with Judah, and what turns out to be very clear is the understanding that it is Babylon which is the imperial center. Babylon participates directly in the action,

38 The section of Jeremiah 37-44 is considered by most scholars to be a fairly uniform composition, referred to sometimes as the 'Baruch Account', or in some way a type of biographical type of material. See the standard commentaries for summaries of the various positions and debates, i.e. J.A. THOMPSON, The Book of Jeremiah, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 1980, 33-50; see also G. WANKE, Untersuchungen zur sogenannten Baruchschrift, BZAW 122, Berlin, W. de Gruyter, 1971. W.L. HOLLADAY sees it as prophetic biography *par excellence,* in Jeremiah 2*:* A Commentary on the book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 26-52, Hermeneia, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1989, 282. R.P. CARROLL does not see this as a unified composition, but as made up of a string of prose stories only unified by the 'unfolding of the divine word as it shapes the fate of the community', (Jeremiah, 670). He does, however, group it together as a section in his commentary. E.K. HOLT focuses on the 'word of YHWH' in her article: The Potent Word of God: Remarks on the Composition of Jeremiah 37-44*, in: Troubling Jeremiah, 161-170.

39 H.-J. STIPP, Jeremia im Parteienstreit: Studien zur Textentwicklung von Jer 26:36-43 und 45 als Beitrag zur Geschichte Jeremias, seines Buches und judäischer Parteien im 6. Jahrhundert, BBB 82, Franfurt, Anton Hain, 1992, sees this account to function as encouragement for the exiled community to support Babylon; C.R. SEITZ, Theology in Conflict, thinks that Jer 37-44, while originally written by scribes who remained in Judah with Jeremiah counseling surrender and life in the land, was subsequently substantially revised by the exiled community after death of Gedaliah, the exiles being the true 'remnant'.

and is not only referred to as a third party. In this narrative, Babylon refers more often to something similar to the historical Babylon than in other parts of the book of Jeremiah, where it might function more symbolically or metaphorically. These chapters may therefore give us important insight into the attitudes toward Babylon that can be detected in the way that it is portrayed, both as a city, an empire and as represented by its king. It is also useful to see how Babylon's presence in Judah after the fall of Jerusalem is represented by the writers of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 37-38

In terms of our focus on Babylon, the most interesting point in this section is that the theme of Jeremiah's encounter with Zedekiah, on which we commented earlier in discussing Jeremia 21, 32 and 34, remains constant. In chapters 37-38, Jeremiah and Zedekiah actually meet each other for the first time in the book of Jeremiah. The encounter is more extended and also contains private, even secret, communication.

Jer 37:1-2 opens, 'Zedekiah son of Josiah, whom King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon made king in the land of Judah, succeeded Coniah son of Jehoiakim. But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of YHWH that he spoke through the prophet Jeremiah'. This introduction is significant in that it again makes it clear that Babylon is considered to be the imperial center of power. The dealings between Jeremiah and Zedekiah should be evaluated in that light. The second line introduces once again the theme of the king and people not listening to the prophet, and the whole section that follows becomes an elaboration of this theme, and shows the roles of king, prophet, scribes and other officials in the whole detailed Jeremian account of the fall of Jerusalem and the monarchy that begins here and stretches on into 44 and, finally, chapter 52.

If we focus on the role of the Babylonian king in the exchange between Jeremiah and Zedekiah in chapters 37-38, we note first of all the detail that the king of Babylon has made Zedekiah king of Judah (Jer 37:1). At this point, a delegation is sent by Zedekiah, in a similar fashion as 21:1-2, this time to ask the prophet to pray to YHWH. The message from YHWH that Jeremiah tells them to bring back to the king is consistent with his earlier preaching: the city of Jerusalem will be taken by Babylon,[40] despite what looks like a retreat.

40 The term *Chaldean* seems to be preferred in this narrative. כשׂדים: Jer 37:5, 8, 9; חיל הכשׂדים: Jer 37:10, 11; 39:5. All of these occurrences refer to the Babylonian army that

In what is the first encounter directly between Jeremiah and Zedekiah, the king summons the prophet from his place of incarceration after he has been charged with defecting to the enemy, the Chaldeans. Zedekiah again asks for a word form YHWH.[41] He does not seem to accept the earlier messages. The message is again the same; Zedekiah will be handed over to the king of Babel, Jeremiah tells him (Jer 37:17). In this conversation between Jeremiah and Zedekiah, taking place in a private audience with the king, Jeremiah repeats the judgment on Zedekiah, that he will be handed over to the king of Babylon, consistent with Jer 21:7; 32:3-5 and 34:21, 22. Jeremiah continues with a reproach, asking Zedekiah where his prophets are. Those who had the opposite message, he claims, that the king of Babylon will not come against Jerusalem, they are the ones who should be in prison. This exchange recalls the theme of how to respond to prophecy, discussed under Jer 28, above.

Basically, in this exchange, Babylon/the king of Babylon represents the message of Jeremiah and his counterparts that remains quite consistent in the book of Jeremiah: the king of Babylon will attack Judah and its king. Jer 38:3 also belongs in this category, as do the more conditionally worded 38:17-18 and 38:20-23. Jer 38 also continues the themes of Jeremiah's imprisonment and the rejection of prophecy. The court officials react to his message by throwing him in a cistern (Jer 38:1, 6). Meanwhile, king Zedekiah continues to want to hear what Jeremiah has to say, and calls for another private meeting (38:14). In this final exchange between the two, Jeremiah brings a conditional word of judgment from YHWH: surrender to Babylon and save your life, or resist, and the city will be sacked and the king himself not be spared (38:17-18, 20-23).

The conditional oracle of Jer 38:14-23 is set in a context where Jeremiah is imprisoned and secretly talking to the king. The siege is in effect and the king really does not have much time to make any choices. This in itself is ironic and contributes to the ambivalent portrayal of Zedekiah. This final (in narrative terms) oracle against Zedekiah sums up the theology of the double message of Jeremiah: you did not listen, therefore YHWH will destroy Jerusalem, and give in to Babylon and YHWH will spare you. In earlier contexts, the consequences have been

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is besieging or threatening Jerusalem. *Kasdim* in Jer 38:2. 19. 23 all deal with contexts discussing submitting to the Babylonians. יד הכשׂדים: Jer 38:18.

41 Jeremiah is accused of defecting to the Chaldeans. He is arrested on this charge when he is on his way to his property. Jeremiah denies the charge but Irijah son of Shelemiah son of Hananiah, who arrested him, is so enraged that he brings him in. Jeremiah is imprisoned in the house of Jonathan, which was a makeshift prison.

spelled out, sometimes in seemingly unconditional form (Jer 21:1-7), in other cases more positively.

Jeremiah 39-44

The narrative of Jer 39:1-10 describes the siege and fall of Jerusalem, and the occurrences of מלך בבל here refer to what is meant to be understood as something similar to the historical Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon (39:1, 3, 5, 6). Here is also told in narrative form the account of the capture of Zedekiah. The occurrences Babylon in 39:7, 9 refer to Babylon as a place to which the captives are brought and to which the people are exiled.

Jer 39:11-14 is a key text pertaining to the Babylonian king's treatment of Jeremiah, very different from the verses immediately preceding. Though the referent of מלך בבל is not necessarily different than in 39:1-10, the type of text is different in that it is dealing with the personal life of Jeremiah and his fate, not the general story of Jerusalem and its king (with its parallels in Jer 52 and 2 Kgs 25). As such, it gives a personal description of the king of Babylon; he is not just the symbol of the kingdom. Here he deals concretely with Jeremiah as a person. He deals positively with Jeremiah, it seems, but readers are not told what Jeremiah thinks or feels.

Going on to Jer 40, *Babylon* again describes Babylon as the place of exile (40:1, 4, 7). More interesting is the contrast between the king of Babylon portrayed here and king Zedekiah in Jeremiah 37-38. Zedekiah seems be afraid of his own courtiers. In contrast, the king of Babylon is portrayed in Jer 40 as an agent of YHWH. In 40:5 the king of Babylon is said to have appointed Gedaliah governor of Judah, and when this is reported to the Judean army and troops out in the country, they gather around him (Jer 40:7-8). Gedaliah, the Babylon-appointed governor, continues to preach the same message as Jeremiah had uttered: 'Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldeans. Stay in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall go well with you (Jer 40:9)'.[42] The news travels on to the neighboring kingdoms, that the Babylonian king has appointed Gedaliah governor of Judah and left a remnant in Judah (40:11), and the Judeans from these countries also come back and resume their existence in the land. The Babylon-appointed leadership, acting as agent of

42 Just as, in the verses immediately preceding (Jer 40:2-3) Nebuzaradan, the captain of the army, tells Jeremiah what has happened in words Jeremiah himself would have used, and in an ironic reversal of authority gives Jeremiah freedom of movement on the terms of the empire.

YHWH, is now enacting the scenarios preached earlier by Jeremiah as the 'good' choice of submitting to Babylon and remaining in the land. As such, the vision of Jer 27 is being realized here.

Immediately however, a shadow is cast over this good choice through the plot to assassinate Gedaliah (40:13-16). Some of those who had rallied around Gedaliah in 40:8 splinter off and plot against the Babylon-appointed governor. This illustrates yet again the ambiguity of what later generations were supposed to consider as the right choice to have been made in the face of the Babylonian takeover of Judah. Gedaliah, of the Shaphan-family, is killed by a member of the royal family, *because* he had been appointed governor by the king of Babylon. We see yet again, an element of struggle between the Judaean monarchy and the Babylonian imperial monarchy. We might also detect that the writers of Jeremiah are showing the alignment of the writing class (represented by the Shaphan family) with the Babylonians. In Jer 41:3 the Chaldean soldiers in Judah are killed by the assassin Ishmael ben Nethaniah, along with Judean soldiers who were with Gedaliah. The Chaldeans are considered to be of the same party as the Babylon-faithful Judeans and share the same fate. The newly set up administration of the Babylonians is quite shaky, and the assassination leads to civil war. Initially, success is with Ishmael ben Nethaniah (41:4-10), but the popular support is with Johanan ben Kareah (41:11-14), and this group gets ready to flee to Egypt because they are afraid of the Chaldeans after the murder of Gedaliah. Jeremiah is entirely missing from Jer 40:7-41:18.

When he does reappear, Jeremiah preaches what can be seen as an adjusted version of his earlier message. At this time of crisis for the Judean 'remnant', the group seeks out Jeremiah to pray for them, and promises to obey the voice of YHWH.[43] Jeremiah's answer to their prayer is a divine speech in conditional form: if they remain in the land, all will be well, if they leave for Egypt and do not stay in the land, they will die by sword, famine and pestilence (42:10-22). He also says, 'Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon, as you have been; do not be afraid of him, says YHWH, for I am with you, to save you and to rescue you from his hand', (42:11), which addresses the group's concern about retaliation for the murder of Gedaliah. Jeremiah advocates staying in the land, and preaches against going to Egypt. We thus see that Jeremiah and the Babylon-appointed administration preach the same message (Jer 40:9).

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43 For an analysis of Jer 42 as divine consultation through intercession, see R.I. THELLE, Ask God. Divine Consultation in the Literature of the Hebrew Bible, BET 30, Frankfurt a. M., Peter Lang, 2002, 134-137.

Johanan ben Kareah and his group do not believe Jeremiah; they do not keep their promise to obey the voice of YHWH (42:6), and they commit the same mistake that the Israelite rulers made before them, to ignore the word of YHWH to their own detriment. Their fears that Babylon will deport and kill them (43:3) are stronger than the divine reassurance that they will be protected if they stay in Judah; they defy YHWH's warning and direct command not to go to Egypt (43:4-7). The power of Babylon as the place of exile and death is still as strong as it was before the destruction of Jerusalem. Jeremiah's authority is also questioned; the prophet's word is thought to be under the influence of his scribe Baruch, perhaps another case of the writers' wish to emphasize the power of the scribes?

The bad choice made by Johanan and his group becomes very clear in the divine speech Jeremiah is told to deliver once they get to Egypt. In Jer 43:10-13, in what is tantamount to an oracle against Egypt,[44] the power of the king of Babylon to fulfill the will of YHWH is made clear. For the third time in the book of Jeremiah, King Nebuchadrezzar is called YHWH's servant, and the power of his royal throne is manifested. Most likely, the Judahites who have fled to Egypt are meant to included in the oracle prophecying pestilence, captivity, and death by the sword, (Jer 43:11). This implication is spelled out in the closing of Jer 44, where we read, '…all the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt shall perish by the sword and by famine, until not one is left…I am going to punish you in this place' (Jer 44:27, 29). The Egyptian Pharaoh will face the same fate as Zedekiah, and be handed over to King Nebuchadrezzar.

The narrative of the fall of Judah and its aftermath is, overall, consistent with the preaching of Jer 2-24, and with the themes worked over in Jer 26-36. What is perhaps striking, in some sense, is how rarely YHWH is referred to in 39-41. Both in 21-25 and later, Jeremiah's divine messages had strongly emphasized that it is YHWH who will destroy Jerusalem, and that Nebuchadrezzar is his ally. However, compared to the conquest accounts of the book of Joshua, for example, where YHWH is very active, here he seems to leave everything to Nebuchadrezzar in the actual account of the campaign. Indirectly, however, it is

44 In fact it is similar to several oracles against Egypt and other nations where Nebuchadrezzar is presented as the agent of the destruction, Jer 46:2-12, 13-24, 25-26. Babylon is presented similarly in several oracles against other nations in the book Ezekiel: Ezek 21:23-32; 23:23-24 (the Babylonians bring destruction); 26:7 and 29:17-21 (Babylon brings destruction on Tyre as instrument of YHWH, and will give him Egypt); 30:6-19, 22-26; 32:11 (in an oracle against Egypt Babylon is an instrument of YHWH against it).

clear that it is YHWH's will that is being carried out, as in the oracle Jeremiah is to present to Ebed-melech in Jer 39:16-18, and in the speech of Nebuzaradan to Jeremiah explaining the rationale for the disaster that has ocurred (40:2-3). This speech is introduced in v. 1 as the word of YHWH that came to Jeremiah. It seems that YHWH here speaks through the Babylonian official. Indirectly, therefore, YHWH is carrying out his campaign of disaster on Judah.

Jeremiah 50-51

Regarding the OAN in Jer 46-51, in the present context it is important to note that the oracle on Babylon has the most space devoted to it, and that this oracle is placed at the end of the section, reflecting the scheme of disaster on the nations in Jer 25:17-26. It is also worth nothing that this portion of the book of Jeremiah was traditionally not given much attention, because the oracles against the nations were considered to be secondary.[45] King Nebuchadnezzar is referred to in several of the oracles against other nations (46:2, 13, 26; 49:28, 30, see note 44).

Chapters 50-51 make up the most anti-Babylonian portion of Jeremiah, and the oracle against Babylon is the longest of the OAN in Jer 46-51. With regard to Babylon, this is also the section that has the highest concentration of references to Babylon in the Hebrew Bible, with 74 out of 306 occurrences, and the highest number of combinations with בבל.[46] In Jer 50-51 Babylon is referred to figuratively in the most varied way in the whole book of Jeremiah.[47]

These chapters were considered to be late, inauthentic additions to the book of Jeremiah and were thus not highly regarded. Recently studies on the chapters have appeared that attempt to counter the view of B. DUHM that these texts are just thrown together and do not bring

45 For a fairly recent treatment of the topic of 'Oracles against the Nations', see B. HUWYLER, Jeremia und die Völker. Untersuchungen zu den Völkersprüchen in Jeremia 46-49, FAT 20, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 1997.

46 Including ארץ בבל, בת בבל, גבורי בבל, חומת בבל, ישבי בבל, פסילי בבל, תוך בבל.

47 For a study of the ways in the pastoral metaphors can help readers understand ways of thinking in the book of Jeremiah, see PIERRE J.P. VAN HECKE, Metaphorical Shifts in the Oracle against Babylon (Jeremiah 50-51), SJOT 17/1, 2003, 68-88. For a short description of the various types of imagery used to depict Babylon, see A.O. BELLIS, The Changing Face of Babylon in Prophetic/Apocalyptic Literature: Seventh Century BCE to First Century CE and Beyond, in: L.L. GRABBE and R.D. HAAK (eds.), Knowing the End from the Beginning: The Prophetic, the Apocalyptic and their Relationships, Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 46 London/New York: T&T Clark/Continuum, 2003, 65-73, (66-67).

anything new.[48] Further, scholars have become aware of the importance of these chapters for the overall scheme and structure of the whole book of Jeremiah.[49]

The judgment on Babylon in this oracle is devastating and complete; sometimes told as something that is coming in the future, and sometimes as something that has already happened. YHWH is the agent of destruction; he is carrying it out, though sometimes through other enemies, and it is his plan and his purpose.

The reason for the destruction of Babylon is not given the first two times that destruction is announced, in 50:2-3 and 9-10. The building up of a reason for YHWH's destruction begins in 50:11-16. It is because Babylon has 'plundered [YHWH's] heritage', (50:11), because of YHWH's wrath (50:13), because Babylon has 'sinned against YHWH' (50:14, this phrase missing in LXX), and it is the 'vengeance of YHWH', and it should be done to her (Babylon) as she has done (50:15). This is quite vague and unspecific, but we get a sense, at least, that the destruction of Babylon is a punishment. In fact, the verb פקד appears quite regularly in Jer 50-51 with seven occurrences (50:18, 18, 31; 51:27, 44, 47, 52), and twice in nominal form (50:27; 51:18). In 50:17-18, Babylon will be punished because it 'gnawed on Israel's bones'. The king of Babylon will be punished for what he did to Israel, just as the king of Assyria was. The logic of this passage is that Babylon will be destroyed because it did destroy. In 50:21-27, Babylon has become a 'horror among the nations', and has 'set up a snare for herself' without knowing it, because she 'challenged YHWH', (50:23-24). This accusation is also quite vague, but implies that Babylon somehow got caught up in a game that she was unable to see the extent of, and that she went somehow too far, and now must be punished. 'Their day has come, the time of their punishment', (50:27). News of this punishment is in 50:28 said

48 An example of a study that wants to show the careful structure of the chapters is K.T. AITKEN, The Oracles against Babylon in Jeremiah 50-51; Structures and Perspectives, Tyndale Bulletin 35, 1984, 25-63; AITKEN perhaps stretches the idea of a composition in several movements somewhat further than the material can support. See D.J. REIMER, The Oracles Against Babylon in Jeremiah 50-51, for a different view on structure (p. iv-v, 7, 13-15, 22-24, 99-104), and a history of research on these chapters, (1-8). See also A.O. BELLIS, The Structure and Composition of Jeremiah 50:2-51:58, and her more recent A.O. BELLIS, Poetic Structure and Intertextual Logic in Jeremiah 50*, in: Troubling Jeremiah, 179-199.

49 See, in particular, the work of M. KESSLER, e.g. The Function of Chapters 25, and 50-51 in the Book of Jeremiah, in: Troubling Jeremiah, 64-72; and, in the same volume, R.P. CARROLL, Halfway Through a Dark Wood: Reflections on Jeremiah 25, 73-86; and E.K. HOLT, The Meaning of an *Inclusio*: A Theological Interpretation of the Book of Jeremiah, SJOT 17/2, 2003, 183-205, who sees Jer 50-51 as forming an *inclusio* with Jer 4-6, the oracles containing judgment on Judah.

to travel to Zion, where it is declared as, 'vengeance of YHWH our God (את־נקמת יהוה)[50], vengeance for his temple (נקמת היכל, missing in LXX)'. The idea of 'tit for tat' that seems to be the prevalent understanding of the reason for Babylon's punishment continues in 50:29-30, where Babylon should be repaid 'according to her deeds, just as she has done, do to her, for she has defied YHWH, the holy one of Israel'. This repeats themes from both 50:15 and 24, and continues on in 50:30-31, where YHWH declares that he is 'against you' (אליך זדון, also used in 50:29; the 'you' referring to Babylon, presumably). The day has come for the 'time of her punishment' (cf. 50:27), the 'arrogant one shall fall'.

The idea of vengeance and repaying deeds is found also in Jer 51:6, where in a call to flee Babylon, the Israelites, presumably, are told to leave and save their lives and not stay and perish, because it is 'the time of YHWH's vengeance (עת נקמה היא ליהוה)', and that 'he is repaying her what is due'. The purpose of YHWH is stated also in 51:11 as the destruction of Babylon, because it is 'the vengeance of YHWH, vengeance for his temple' (just as in 50:28, which is missing in LXX, therefore thought to be an interpolation from 51:11). The idea of repaying also appears in 51:24, though this time it will happen before their eyes; there is no talk of fleeing this time, as in 51:6. In a passage where it is presumably the 'inhabitants of Zion' who are speaking, King Nebuchadrezzar is accused of having devoured, crushed and swallowed Israel, and then spewed her out (cf. accusations of 'gnawing' on Israel in 50:17). Israel swears vengeance, (51:35). This is the most direct instance of a concrete accusation against Babylon with a cry for vengeance. Immediately following it is a divine speech in which YHWH promises to avenge their cause, a speech that continues until 51:44, with the concrete mention of punishment on Bel, and making him 'disgorge what he has swallowed'. Finally, the idea of paying for something is expressed in 51:49, where it says that 'Babylon must fall for the slain of Israel, *as the slain of all the earth* have fallen for Babylon'. Here, though, the reference to retribution seems to go beyond the historical Babylon; now 'Babylon' has become a kind of arch-enemy of all peoples. Finally, the idea of repaying also appears in 51:56, where YHWH is described as a god of recompense, retribution, requitals, (אל גמלקת), one who will surely pay up (שׁלם ישלם).

50 Interestingly, the nominal form נקמה, which is not that common in the Hebrew Bible (a total of 25), is found seven times in Jer 50-51. Elsewhere in Jeremiah, it appears in the first and the last of the so-called 'confessions', (11:20; 20:10.12). The verbal form of נקם occurs 32 times, appearing in both *qal*, *niph'al*, *pi'el*, *hoph'al* and *hitpa'el*, with 5 occurences in Jeremiah.

Jer 50:35-38 represents another oracle of judgment on Babylon, a 'sword-song', bringing in another theme as the reason for destruction, namely that Babylon is a 'land of images' (50:38). This theme was introduced in the opening verses of Jer 50, and reappears also in 51:44 and 51:47, 52. The 'sword-song' also seems to take the idea of judgment to a different, more universal level than the idea of retribution, as verses 39-40, indicated by the analogy to Sodom and Gomorrah in verses 39-40. The same seems to be the case in what could be called the 'club song' of 51:20-23 and of 51:47-48, 52-53, which focuses on idols.

The opening verses also introduce the so-called enemy-from-the-North motif (50:3; reappearing briefly again in 9), and Jer 50:41-43 expounds on the idea. Verses 41-43 are all but identical to Jer 6:22-26, an oracle against Israel. This brings in an interesting alignment of Judah and Babylon that has been commented on by scholars, and to which we shall return below. In 50:43, the king of Babylon is described as writhing in anguish like a woman in labor, just as in 6:24 it was the people of Israel who describe their fear in this way. In 51:11 we hear that YHWH has stirred up the Medes in his cause against Babylon, and in 51:27, Ararat, Minni and Ashkenaz are mentioned. Jer 51:48 incorporates this motif into a cry of joy over the destruction of Babylon.

In Jer 50:44-46 YHWH is described as a lion who attacks the flock. Readers will be reminded of YHWH's previous attacks on Israel and how the people were chased away. Now it is Babylon that will have its flock scattered, because YHWH has decided on a plan against it. The plan, or purpose of YHWH against Babylon is referred to several times and is an important point in the cumulative impact of the oracle (50:45; 51:11, 12, 14, 29.). Further, destruction and devastation is often announced in the first person with YHWH as the agent, the one who is going to 'stir up and bring against' (50:8), 'kindle a fire', 'devour everything' (50:32), 'stir up a destructive wind', 'send winnowers' (51:1-2), and 'fill you with troops like a swarm of locusts' (51:14). The whole 'club-song' of 51:20-23 is in the first person, where the speaker, presumably YHWH, will use the club to 'smash nations', 'destroy kingdoms', 'smash the horse and its rider', 'smash the chariot and charioteer', the man and woman, the old man and boy, the young man and the girl, the shepherds and their flock, the farmers, the governors and their deputies. He goes on a rampage, clubbing down everything with his weapon of war. In short, YHWH is 'against' Babylon (51:25), and tells her he will 'stretch out [his] hand against you, and roll you down from the crags and make you a burned out mountain', (51:25). He tells Israel that he will take vengeance for them and 'dry up her sea and make her fountain dry' (51:36), 'make them drunk' until they fall asleep, never to

wake up, and 'bring them down like lambs to the slaughter' (51:37). YHWH will 'punish the images of Babylon' (51:47), and 'punish her idols' (51:52), and make all the leadership drunk, never to wake up (51:57).

The theme of YHWH's destruction is found throughout the oracle, as in 51:1-4, with threats of depopulation, killing and destruction. 51:7 picks up the theme of Babylon as a golden cup in the hand of YHWH. The theme of YHWH's cup of wrath from 25:15-29 is shifted to make Babylon the one who makes the nations drunk.

In Jer 51:15-19 YHWH is praised as creator and commander of all, in a type of poetry akin to 'Second Isaiah'. This accentuates the theme of YHWH as the supreme ruler, against whom no one can measure up, also found in 50:44 and 51:57.

Having commented on most of the segments that deal with judgment on Babylon, we have gotten some sense of the message. YHWH is on a mission to destroy Babylon in every way. It is the time to pay back Babylon for what it did. Nowhere, however, is there any awareness directly from the text, that YHWH himself had used Babylon as his servant to attack Judah and destroy Jerusalem. As readers we assume that this is the background, and as readers we have read these parts of Jeremiah and they form the background for our reading of Jer 50-51. And if not, we are given some hints also in the text, at least that Judah/Jerusalem/Israel/Jacob has suffered (50:6-7, 17; 51:5, 24, 49, 51).

The sub-theme of Jer 50-51 is Israel's return, and it is introduced fairly early in the text, in 50:4-5 and 6-7. Jer 50:4-5, if read in isolation, do not necessarily require Babylon to have been destroyed; this is a promise about return to Zion in the future. 50:6-7 bring in the pastoral motif of the people as sheep who were scattered, having no shepherd, and sets the stage for their being devoured by their enemies. The logic of the enemy is even given: they consider themselves not guilty, because Israel had sinned against their god. 50:17 picks up again the pastoral motif, and brings it together with the image of devouring and 'gnawing of bones'. Punishment of Babylon is here directly connected to a promise of restoration for Israel, and both the pastoral imagery and eating-imagery are continued here in a positive way; the sheep will be restored to their pasture, and will not be hungry. The juxtapositioning of destruction for Babylon with restoration for Israel occurs several times (50:18-20, 33-34).

The motif of fleeing from Babylon also belongs to the portions of this text that address Israel directly, (50:8). 51:45 is interesting when read directly following the preceding section, which deals with Babylon being punished and forced to disgorge what she has swallowed;

'Come out of her, my people!', can be read as a continuation of the 'disgorging'-theme. The motif of fleeing often finds its rationale as a way of escaping YHWH's anger and the destruction that will befall Babylon. There is a reverse movement being encouraged here. When YHWH threatened Jerusalem, his agent Babylon took people prisoner and brought them to Babylon. Here, YHWH's people are being encouraged to flee in order to escape destruction (see also Jer 51:50). Redemption and survival for Israel is clearly a sub-theme in Jer 50-51, and is juxtaposed to destruction for Babylon.[51]

A final detail in Jer 51:8-9 stands out somewhat within Jer 50-51. These verses refer to how Israel tried to heal Babylon, 'Bring balm for her wound; perhaps she may be healed. We tried to heal Babylon, but she could not be healed. Forsake her, and let each of us go to our own country…'. These verses follow YHWH's call to Israel to flee from Babylon. This seems to be a kind of 'last attempt' to cure Babylon of the wound to which it will succumb. It shows a kind of solidarity between Israel and Babylon, recognition on the part of Israel of the consequences of sin, since it happened to Israel. But the Israelites give up to save their own life. YHWH's anger toward Babylon and his judgment on it are greater than Israel's ability to heal and cure.[52]

All in all, the dominant message in Jer 50-51 is YHWH's rage and commitment to his plan of destroying Babylon. Babylon is the enemy of Judah. The destruction of Babylon is Judah's revenge. Thus, Babylon is portrayed in opposition to Judah. However, it is also *like* Judah, as John Hill has shown in his book. An identification occurs between the two, particularly in light of the book's structural features, and also through the use of the same stock of motifs in the preaching of judgment, for example, the figure of the enemy from the north. Like Judah, Babylon stands under the judgment of YHWH.

The language of Jer 50-51 is very concrete and stays within what can be classified as a historical domain with regard to metaphorical reference. Yet, in some sense, when read in light of the whole of the book and the interpretative keys we may find along the way, such as in chap. 25, Babylon comes to represent more than the historical Babylon,

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51 See D. REIMER's treatment of the theme of Israel's restoration in The Oracles against Babylon, 186-194. See also R. ALBERTZ, Israel in Exile: The History and Literature of the Sixth Century BCE, trans. D. GREEN, Studies in Biblical Literature 3, Atlanta, SBL, 2002, 180-196.

52 The motif of the incurable wound is prevalent in the judgment on Israel in Jer 2-20, and is only one example of numerous literary motifs and metaphors that align Israel and Babylon in the book of Jeremiah. For an excellent summary of these, see HILL, Friend or Foe?, 172-181.

and becomes here the ultimate enemy of YHWH, the entity that stands under an almost cosmic judgment. The genre of taunting, mocking humiliation is well known in prophetic oracles against other nations, but is not really present in Jeremiah 50-51. Other prophetic poetry that aims humiliation and mockery at Babylon is present in Isaiah 13, 14 and 47.[53] This distinguishes the portrayal of Babylon in the book of Jeremiah from other traditions, and contributes to the ambivalent picture of Babylon that distinguishes the book.

Finally, Babylon is also the place *from which* the exiles will return. The concept of *return* and the idea of *Diaspora* both become identified with Babylon in an antithetical way through this text. And Babylon is devastated, but also shown mercy – not by YHWH, but by Israel (51:8-9).

Jeremiah 52

In the closing chapter 52, the book of Jeremiah is wrapped up with the more 'history'-like narrative of the fall of Jerusalem. Here Babylon signifies something similar to the historical Babylon. The last chapter of the book of Jeremiah brings the reader back in time to the fall of Jerusalem, aligning the ending with the ending of the book of Kings. It frames the book and places the emphasis on the fall of Judah, immediately following the grave oracles against Babylon. And, like the book of Kings, it ends with the pardoning of Jehoiakin, which can be seen as a hope for the restoration of the royal line of David.

Summary

The above exploration with the focus on Babylon in the book of Jeremiah has shown the following: Jer 20:1-6 spells out in clear terms what in chapters 2-19 have been unidentified threats of judgment on Judah. Babylon is identified with the judgment of YHWH, and as *the place of punishment, exile and death*. Jer 21 introduces the idea of Nebuchadrezzar's partnership with YHWH and their alignment against Judah, which is developed further in Jer 25 and 27 especially. Babylon is identified, metonymically by its king, as *the power that brings disaster on Judah*. Unconditional judgment is pronounced on the king of Judah, with Babylon representing the end of the royal house, whereas *the*

53 On Isaiah 14, see J.B. GEYER, Mythology and Lament. Studies in the Oracles about the Nations, SOTS Monographs, Aldershot, Hants, Ashgate, 2004.

people are given the choice, with Babylon being associated with the way of life. In Jer 25, the 'fourth year of Jehoiakim' is identified with the beginning of judgment on Judah, and this year is lined up with the 'first year of Nebuchadrezzar'. The alignment between YHWH and Nebuchadrezzar is expressed in strong terms, with the king of Babylon referred to as YHWH's servant, in a culmination of the preaching of judgment on Judah from Jer 2-24. For the first time, however, the *future punishment of Babylon* is introduced in 25:12-14, expanding into a *judgment on the whole world and on Babylon as a kind of mythical entity*.

Chapters 27-29 are concerned with the message of submission to the king of Babylon, thus picking up the choice of the way of life from chap. 21. *Submission to Babylon is equated with the true message of YHWH*, whereas other messages are considered false by the writers of Jeremiah. Even the king of Judah is offered a way out, if he gives in to the king of Babylon. The king of Babylon will be the one in power, and this is the prophecy that the king and people should listen to. Chap. 29 shows that prophecy traveled from Judah to Babylon by letter, thus indicating a dynamic relation between the two centers of power, and that YHWH's message is mobile. Babylon is considered *the place of YHWH's shalom* and giving in to Babylon entails a place of exile that can be good. Babylon is *a place from which the community eventually will return*. Chapters 30-35 continue to work out the balance between Babylon as destructive power and the possibility of future restoration. When the message about submission to Babylon is finally rejected, Jer 37-44 narrate the Babylonian conquest. Here it is made clear that Babylon is the imperial center; Jerusalem has no more power. It is the king of Babylon who is in charge. The people and king did not listen; therefore YHWH destroys Judah through Babylon. The new Babylon-appointed leadership implements the vision of Jer 27, submitting to Babylon. The result is the chaos of civil war. YHWH has power through Babylon also over those who flee to Egypt.

Finally, in the oracle against Babylon in 50-51 it is time for the judgment on Babylon. YHWH is now turning his vengeance and punishment on Babylon, and will pay her back for her deeds. Babylon has crushed Israel, and must now be punished. There does not seem to be any awareness in the text of 50-51 itself that YHWH had at any time declared Babylon his servant or been allied with Babylon. It is expressed that 'Babylon must fall for the slain of Israel, as the slain of all the earth have fallen for Babylon' (51:49). YHWH is against Babylon, and is on a mission to destroy it. When read in light of interpretative keys such as chap. 25, Babylon comes to represent more than the historical Babylon, and becomes the ultimate enemy of YHWH and a cosmic

judgment of a kind. Finally, Babylon is also the place from which the exiles will return, and Israel's restoration is juxtaposed to Babylon's destruction as a sub-theme of Jer 50-51. The oracle against Babylon is dated to the fourth year of Zedekiah. Therefore, the readers are meant to understand that YHWH had let this message to the Babylonians be heard during the time of Jeremiah the prophet. The closing chapter of Jeremiah leaves that reader on the eve of the destruction of Jerusalem.

3. The Transfer of Power from 'Jerusalem' to 'Babylon' in Jeremiah

We now turn to relate our findings to the situation of the *writing* of prophetic books. What can the portrayal of Babylon in Jeremiah tell us about how the writers viewed Babylon, the fall of Jerusalem and the removal of power from Judah to Babylon? How is the experience of the fall of Jerusalem and the Judean monarchy, and the new situation this brought about for the custodians of Israelite prophecy, reflected in the book of Jeremiah? Can the impact of the movement of the center of power from the royal capital of Judah to the imperial center of Babylon be seen in the way that Babylon and Judah and their kings are portrayed in Jeremiah? Or, turning the question around, what does the book of Jeremiah tell us about the relationship between Judah and Babylon and their kings?

The Production of Prophetic Books in the Persian Period

The traditional understanding of prophecy in scholarship has affected the way that prophetic books have been read, including Jeremiah. There are five main characteristics that can be brought up here. 1) *An evolutionary understanding of the development of prophecy*. Very roughly, I am referring to the scheme of 'early', 'classical', 'post-exilic', and 'late' prophecy, where 'post-exilic' is understood as stagnation and 'late' is understood as degeneration of 'classical' Israelite prophecy. 2) *The emphasis on the so-called classical prophets*. This emphasis can hardly be exaggerated. The 'standing forth' of the classical prophets in the 8th century was understood as a breakthrough for a new 'ethical awareness'. Distinct from early or primitive prophecy, the classical prophets were seen as standing at a different level of development, and it was thought that their message represented a qualitatively new revelation, termed 'ethical monotheism'. The classical prophets are represented by the pre-

exilic prophetic figures Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zephaniah. Beginning with Ezekiel, the turn towards an emphasis on cult and law begins, which is understood as the beginning of a decline. The classical prophets were also often referred to as 'prophets of doom' (*Unheilspropheten*), based on the observation of the many speeches of judgment on their own people. 3) *The emphasis on the figure of the prophet and his 'original', 'authentic' words,* his *ipsissima verba*. The focus on the prophets as individual figures has dominated scholarship up until the mid-1980s, and still does in many contexts. The determination of the *ipsissima verba* as 'authentic' while so-called later additions were considered 'inauthentic', and the incessant quest for the restoration of the prophet's original words, led to the atomized reading of source criticism which impacted the later historical-critical methods. 4) *A diachronic approach that favors early material*. This is connected with the second and third points, the privileging of so-called classical prophecy, the individual prophetic figures and their words. 5) *The idea that the 'classical' prophets were 'writing' prophets.* This is characterized by a simplified notion of the way from spoken prophetic word to written collections of prophetic oracles. The idea that the prophets who have books named after them may have written their own books has coexisted with the theory of oral transmission by 'circles' of disciples, developed by the 'Scandinavian school'.

M. FLOYD offers a model to replace the older model of the understanding of the way in which prophetic books came to be written.[54] He offers a criticism of the life-cycle understanding of the development of prophecy that has characterized scholarship and shows, in particular, how the view that the Second Temple period was a period of decay and 'decadence' is incorrect and reflects biases and prejudices on the part of the scholarly tradition. He locates Israelite prophetic practice within the Ancient Near Eastern context, in terms of the world-view presupposed, and also distinguishes between the prophetic book as a genre and prophecy as a phenomenon. He also offers a timely critique of the

54 M.H. FLOYD, The Production of Prophetic Books in the Early Second Temple Period, in: Prophets, Prophecy and Prophetic Texts, 276-297; FLOYD has written several articles developing the ideas about how prophetic books were written, and applying the theory to specific books, including, M.H. FLOYD, Basic Trends in the Form-Critical Study of Prophetic Texts, in: M.A. SWEENEY and E. BEN ZVI (eds.), The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 2001, 298-311; other examples of the work done on the production of prophetic books include selected articles from: E. BEN ZVI and M. H. FLOYD (eds.), Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy, SBL Symposium Series 10, Altanta, SBL, 2000; E. BEN ZVI, The Prophetic Book: A Key Form of Prophetic Literature, in: The Changing Face of Form Criticism, 276-297.

orality-literacy dichotomy so popular in scholarship, and the belief that literacy somehow changed the character of societies and thus explains the development of Judahite religion.[55] The model FLOYD sketches for the production of prophetic books is not without support in recent scholarly discussions. In fact, it seems to be one expression of what has come to be a view held by an increasing number of scholars (as seen by the literature referenced in note 54).

The assumptions of FLOYD include an outline of the Ancient Near Eastern world view, which understands the cosmos as being organized with a fundamental correspondence between the heavenly realm and the earthly realm. The heavenly realm was represented by the divine king, the local high god and his 'court'. The earthly realm was represented by the earthly king and his court and other subordinates. The point of correspondence between the two was the royal capital and the royal temple. Diviners had the task of understanding the interaction between these two realms, in order to determine what kind of behavior was in agreement with the will of the heavenly king, and that would thus lead to blessing. In ancient Israel, YHWH was the heavenly king, the Davidic king the earthly king, with Jerusalem as its central point of contact along the *axis mundi* between heaven and earth, and prophets practiced the task of understanding and interpreting the interaction between the two realms.[56]

On this background, FLOYD sets out to suggest why, during a certain period of time (around the sixth through the fourth century) a distinct genre that can be called 'prophetic book' was produced in Judah. The three major factors that might be said to cause a change in the

55 See FLOYD, The Production of Prophetic Books, 278-79; also, more fully in: FLOYD, 'Write the revelation' (Hab 2:2): Re-imagining the Cultural History of Prophecy', in: Writings and Speech, 103-143 (105-125). Different views on this topic are held by other contributors to that volume, as well as to the present volume.

56 I am not interested at this point in critiquing FLOYD's model, because I see it as a flexible model for a way of thinking, and which I am about to test out with respect to central tenets of the book of Jeremiah. I would just like to point out that perhaps the weakest part of the model is the part that assumes that pre-exilic prophecy can be described on the basis of the texts in Kings or Jeremiah (p. 283-285), without any qualifications about when these texts were produced or what may have shaped their agenda in terms of their understanding of prophecy. Particularly the use of Jer 36 as an example of how prophets dictated their words to a scribe, if they were prevented from speaking, is problematic. The book of Jeremiah is a prophetic book that was ostensibly produced as a result of the process that FLOYD is describing in this study, and should be used with qualifications as evidence of what prophecy during the monarchic period was like. On the other hand, I do not think some basic description of pre-exilic or monarchic prophecy was like cannot be made on the basis on these texts, but it must be done with more qualifications.

practice of divination are: a change in world view, a change in demographics (including the end of the monarchy), and any new form of divination (such as the genre of prophetic book) that would involve the writing class. With respect to Israel, the destabilization that occurred as a result of the events of the exile was this kind of momentous change, affecting the world view, demographics, and, along with it, the practice of divination.

With the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple and the end of the monarchy, the central point of correspondence between the heavenly and earthly realm was removed. The *axis mundi*, the central point for divine human interaction, was violently broken, cut, gone. The question was how divination could continue at all. This is the question that was addressed by those who had access to the past records of divine-human interaction, the scribes. The result of their various debates and responses to the new situation was the production of a new genre, the prophetic book. FLOYD gives examples from the book of Ezekiel and Zechariah (and elsewhere, Habakkuk and Haggai), showing how each of these gives a new answer to the question of where YHWH's earthly counterpart is located and who represents the earthly king. Prophecy became more difficult, and it was increasingly the scribes with access to the past records who became the custodians of this tradition. Prophecy turned from being primarily an oral phenomenon to also include the interpretation of texts (oral prophecy did not end). The present interpreters could take on the role of a past prophet, and 'speak' his words as if they were meant to be heard in the present, with its new situation under Persian imperial rule.

I have given a fairly detailed description of this model for several reasons. By studying the prophetic books with this process in mind, it might be possible to understand the various responses to the exile and eventual restoration, and also to understand the prophetic book as a genre in a new way. Insights from this model seem highly relevant for testing out certain observations that have accumulated through the above study of Babylon in the book of Jeremiah for several reasons. One is that the events portrayed in the book of Jeremiah correspond in time with the events that caused the major ruptures in the traditional Israelite cosmos. With the events associated with what has come to be referred to as 'the exile', the Davidic king was violently removed, and the house of the heavenly king was destroyed, ripping 'a hole, as it were, in the middle of the cosmos' (FLOYD, 2006: 285).

The book of Jeremiah is, with the exception of Ezekiel, the *only prophetic book* that spans the time before and after the Babylonian conquest of Jerusalem. The book of Kings does also cover the same

period, but it is a different type of book, and it is not organized around a single individual as a prophetic book like Jeremiah.[57] The book of Isaiah may by scholars be understood as spanning the time before, during, and after the exile (with the standard division into *proto-*, *deutero-* and *trito-*Isaiah). However, according to the book itself, it covers the time from Uzziah to Hezekiah, thus 'ending' long before 'the time of the book of Jeremiah'. The book of Ezekiel is the prophetic book closest in time to Jeremiah, according the text of the book itself. It begins in the 'fifth year of the exile of king Jehoiakin', and thus does overlap with the book of Jeremiah. Ezekiel is, of course, very different from Jeremiah in terms of style, language, and metaphorical world. It is also different in terms of the vision of the future. Perhaps, however, one of the most interesting differences in our present context is the point of view of the text. Ezekiel faces Jerusalem and speaks from Babylon, whereas the book of Jeremiah speaks from Judah.

Another reason for discussing implications of FLOYD's model in relation to Jeremiah is that no other book is as preoccupied with Babylon as the book of Jeremiah. The sheer amount of text concerning Babylon, YHWH's relationship to Babylon and its role in the book as a whole, beg to be understood in terms of a negotiation of the relationship between Judah and Babylon as the earthly focus for divine-human communication. FLOYD's model gives an opportunity for understanding a dynamic of place and a spatial orientation that involves these two points as the two poles on a bipolar axis along which the heavenly king interacts with the earthly realm.

In addition to the aspect of place, the book of Jeremiah is also negotiating the role of the king. No other prophetic book deals so extensively with encounters between the prophet and the king. Nor does any other prophetic book allot so much space to the enemy king, in this case, Nebuchadrezzar. Particular to the book of Jeremiah is also the presence of several instances of dating given *both* by reference to the Judean *and* the Babylonian king.[58]

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57 It is the specific genre of prophetic book that I am exploring in this study, and for these purposes, I see a major difference between the so-called historical books and the prophetic books. The book of Jeremiah is, however, perhaps the prophetic book that shares most with the book of kings (in addition to overlap between 2 Kgs 24-25 and Jer 52, Jeremiah contains portions with more literary affinity with the stories about prophets in Kings than with the predominantly oracular material characterizing the prophetic books.) On the other hand, Isaiah also shares material with Kings (2 Kgs 18-20).

58 The books of Haggai and Zechariah date the prophecies by reference to the Persian king.

Finally, the book of Jeremiah also thematizes prophecy in a way that no other prophetic book does. Examples are chapters 26, 28 and 29, which deal extensively with what should be understood as correct prophecy, that is, the concern with accuracy and prophetic legitimacy. The book also offers glimpses into ideas the writers might have had about the role of writing and of scribes, through the role of Baruch in the book.

It has surprised me, in fact, that FLOYD has not drawn the book of Jeremiah into his work to a greater degree. On the contrary, it seems as if his uses of Jeremiah 36 show that he considers the book of Jeremiah to reflect the pre-exilic period's view of prophecy, which seems contrary to his idea of how prophetic books were written. The biblical texts are ambivalent in their attitude toward both prophecy and kingship. This indicates that another component of the model, the earthly king and the institution of monarchy, is also under debate in the biblical texts, and should caution us in our use of the texts in assuming the pre-exilic situation.

In the last section of this article it is now time to examine select portions of the Babylon-material in the book of Jeremiah with special attention to the perspective of the proposed writers, the writing class of the early Persian period. I will focus specifically on the role of the king as it is negotiated by the writers, and on the relationship between Judah and Babylon. It is my contention that the use of Babylon in the book of Jeremiah highlights the concept of kingship and its meaning within the enterprise of prophecy. I will examine the ways in which the writers of Jeremiah's negotiate the power shift from Judah to Babylon in their telling of the experience of loss of monarchy and land, focusing on the role of the king.

The King in the Book of Jeremiah: Negotiating a Power Shift

The king is the earthly representative of the heavenly king. What happens to the way that king is remembered when the institution of monarchy ends and imperial power moves 'outside'? The portrayal of Judean kings in the book of Jeremiah agrees in general with the portrayal in 2 Kgs. It follows a recognizable pattern of kings doing evil in the eyes of YHWH.

The kings during whose reign Jeremiah the prophet is active are Josiah, Jehoiakim, Jehoiakin and Zedekiah. Josiah frames the beginning of his work (1:2; 25:3; 36:2). Oracles are dated according to Josiah (3:6). His name in the book of Jeremiah becomes associated with the begin-

ning of Jeremiah's failed career, the beginning of his preaching and the day from which no one listened to his message. Without saying so directly, this implies that also in the time of Josiah, considered a good king in 2 Kgs, the king and people did not obey the word of YHWH. Josiah's name also becomes associated with his sons, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, the two major kings during Jeremiah's career.

The first part of the book of Jeremiah lays the blame for the judgment of YHWH against Judah on her kings (and on prophets, in Jer 23); this is especially clear in the devastating oracle of Jer 22. In this oracle, addressed timelessly to 'king of Judah, who sits on the throne of David' (22:2), the fall of the monarchy is prophesied as a consequence of not obeying the word of YHWH.

In the second part of the book, the readers have more of a chance to know these kings. Jehoiakim becomes associated with judgment, accompanied by the repeated phrase, 'the fourth year of Jehoiakim' (25:1; 36:1; 45:1). One narrative is set at the beginning of his reign, 26:1, and another, probably mistaken, is also attributed to the beginning of his reign (27:1). In the narrative of 26:1, Jehoiakim is set in opposition to Hezekiah, who listened to Isaiah the prophet and turned to YHWH. Jehoiakim, instead, puts the prophet who has prophesied against him to death (26:21-22). Jehoiakim is the king who goes on to destroy the scroll with the prophecy against him (Jer 36). He is very vividly portrayed as a king who resists the word of YHWH and who is violent toward the prophet. It is in the 'days of King Jehoiakim' that the divine word concerning the Rechabites comes to Jeremiah, and contrasts their faithfulness with Israel's unfaithfulness (Jer 35).

Jehoiakin is a more passive figure, closely associated with the year of his deportation (24:1; 27:20; 28:4; 29:2). He gives in to Nebuchadrezzar and is taken into exile with his house (2 Kgs 24). He is portrayed as heeding the message to give in to the Babylonians, which is Jeremiah's message during the reign of Zedekiah. Interestingly, Hananiah's prophecy which contradicts Jeremiah's concerns the length of Babylonian dominion. Hananiah thinks Babylon will fall in two years, whereas Jeremiah prophesies more deportations (27:19-22; 28:14).

Zedekiah, the last king of Judah, is the king who is portrayed most extensively in any prophetic book. I have dealt with all of the texts mentioning Zedekiah, the prophecies against him and the overall impression they give, above in section II. As noted by many scholars, his portrayal seems uneven, and the various oracles about the future do not agree with each other.

Jer 21:1-10, the first text to mention Zedekiah, pronounces the most severe oracle against him, one that does not correspond to the various

narrative accounts of his fate in Jeremiah or in 2 Kgs. The most positive text about Zedekiah is Jer 34:4-5, which promises almost the opposite of 21:1-7. Jer 21 introduces a series of judgments on King Zedekiah and also prefaces the severe oracle of chapter 22 against the royal house, pronouncing the end of the Davidic lineage. Jer 34 is located immediately following a series of promises about the future and the restoration of the house of David.

The ambivalent portrait of Zedekiah in some sense parallels the ambivalent portrait of Babylon, as we have seen in this survey. Scholars have dealt with the ambivalent portrait of Zedekiah in various ways, and perhaps the most interesting for the present analysis is JOHN APPLEGATE's two-part article proposing a 'redactional debate' about the fate of Zedekiah, which in the context of the whole book becomes a 'debate over the eventual fate of Judah'.[59] Though I am not following a redaction critical method, his observations concerning the various prophecies about Zedekiah are relevant and support the present approach.

Further, in its ambivalence, the portrayal of Zedekiah is in a sense the opposite of the portrayal of Nebuchadrezzar/Babylon, in that when YHWH is against Zedekiah he is allied with Nebuchadrezzar/Babylon. When YHWH promises a future for Judah, Zedekiah's death will not be violent (Jer 32). This is especially clear in 27:12-15, which advocates Zedekiah's abdication in favor of king Nebuchadrezzar, who here is described in terms of a status privilege otherwise reserved for Adam, Joshua and King David. These texts, although they are in tension with other portrayals of these kings, set up Jerusalem/the Judean monarchy and Babylon/the Babylonian imperial power as two poles between which the book of Jeremiah is advocating a gliding shift of allegiance.

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59 J. APPLEGATE, The Fate of Zedekiah: Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah. Part I, VT 48/2, 1998, 139-160, and: The Fate of Zedekiah: Redactional Debate in the Book of Jeremiah. Part II, VT 48/3, 1998, 301-308. The quoted reference is from Part I, p. 139.

Scholars have usually understood Zedekiah as weak and under the control of his so-called courtiers, who are supposedly pro-Egyptian. According to M. RONCACE, Zedekiah wants to accommodate the message of Jeremiah about giving in to the Babylonians, but does not do it, M. RONCACE, Jeremiah, Zedekiah, and the Fall of Jerusalem, JSOTSup, 423, New York, T & T Clark, 2005. Other scholars' contributions include H.-J. STIPP, who in a study of the growth of the textual tradition finds that the portrayal of the character of Zedekiah changed through time from a more sympathetic figure in what he considers the earliest texts of Jer 37-38, to a more negative figure in later texts such as chapters 34, 21, 32. Finally, Jer 24 brings this trend to a culmination, more in line with the portrayal of that in 2 Chronicles, in: Zedekiah in the book of Jeremiah: On the Formation of a Biblical Character, CBQ 58, 1996, 627-648.

Zedekiah also sends a delegation to Babylon, to King Nebuchadrezzar. With that delegation Jeremiah sends YHWH's message *to* Babylon, in Jer 29. It is not clear weather or not Zedekiah knew about the message. In 51:59, Zedekiah himself is to have traveled to Babylon with a message. These two messages are completely contradictory in terms of the view of Babylon. The first is a message to the deported Judahites about the good life in Babylon. The second is the oracle against Babylon, which can be read as judgment on Babylon much like the judgment on Judah in Jer 2-24. It is not totally clear how these references to Zedekiah's delegations to Babylon fit in with the broad picture. However, it is clear that Zedekiah is engaging Babylon, and the picture of him as a bad king is not consistent.

As it is reflected in the book of Jeremiah, Nebuchadrezzar is also portrayed ambivalently. This is natural, since Babylon is also inconsistently portrayed. Further, the relationship between Nebuchadrezzar and YHWH is not consistent throughout the book. In the first text where Nebuchadrezzar is mentioned, he is presented as an ally of YHWH against Judah. YHWH will turn on his own people and destroy Jerusalem (21:4-6), and Nebuchadrezzar is permitted to join in and commanded to show no mercy (21:7). This alliance between YHWH and Nebuchadrezzar is accentuated in the MT text compared to the LXX text. In the LXX, YHWH is the subject of the verbs 'pity' and 'compassion' in 21:7, whereas in the MT it is Nebuchadrezzar.[60]

In Jer 25, we also saw that Nebuchadrezzar is referred to as YHWH's servant. In this oracle of judgment on Judah, similar in many ways to Jer 21 discussed above, YHWH is pronouncing judgment on Judah and he himself will bring on the disaster, 'I am going to send for all the tribes of the north, says YHWH, even for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, my servant', (25:9).

In Jer 27, Nebuchadrezzar is exalted to a privileged position normally only associated with the most special of YHWH's chosen ones. Nebuchadrezzar is given control of all of creation, he is the one that all nations should submit to, he is YHWH's servant. In Jeremiah, the drawing up of similarities between Judah and Babylon seems to be one strategy for negotiating the shift of power from Judah to Babylon. When Nebuchadrezzar is designated as YHWH's servant, this links him to David, the prototype for the Judean monarchy.[61] Chapters 39-41 represent a carrying out of Nebuchadrezzar's new mandate. He disposes of King Zedekiah, finally, and installs his own administration.

60 See J. HILL's observations in: The Book of Jeremiah and the Unended Exile, in: Reading the Book of Jeremiah, 149-161 (152-153).

61 See, for a similar line of argument, HILL, Friend or Foe?, 106-110, 129-139, 213.

The 'takeover' of Judah is complete, royal power is removed from Jerusalem and anchored firmly in the imperial center, Babylon.

An interesting thing about the portrayal of the king of Babylon in the book of Jeremiah is how few times he is mentioned in the oracles against Babylon in 50-51 (5 times), compared to the chapters from 21-44. In the oracles against Babylon, Nebuchadrezzar is said to have 'gnawed [Israel's] bones', as the king of Assyria had first devoured it. In a divine oracle, YHWH says he will 'punish the king of Babylon and his land, as I punished the king of Assyria', (Jer 50:17-18). In another oracle of doom against Babylon, a people from the north is referred to that will attack the 'daughter of Babylon', and the king of Babylon will feel fear and anguish 'pain like that of a woman in labor' (50:43).

In another poem in 51:34-40, King Nebuchadrezzar is described as a monster who has swallowed Judah/Israel, and a curse is spoken on Babylon by the inhabitants of Zion/Jerusalem. As an answer, YHWH says that he will defend Judah's cause and avenge her. In 51:44, as what seems to form an inclusio with verse 34, YHWH says that he will 'punish Bel in Babylon, and make him disgorge what he has swallowed'. Here, Nebuchadrezzar and Bel are metaphorically interchangeable.

This portrayal of Nebuchadrezzar is of course completely at odds with the Nebuchadrezzar of Jer 27. We might therefore conclude that the idea of an abdication of the Judahite king in favor of the Babylonian king is not meant to be a permanent solution. As prophesied in Jer 25, the hegemony of Babylon will come to an end, and then, as prophesied in Jer 25 and 50-51, Babylon will stand under the judgment of YHWH, as had Judah.[62]

Another way that the book of Jeremiah sets up links between Judah and Babylon is through synchronizing the years of the reign of the Judean king with king Nebuchadrezzar (25:1 and 32:1). In Jer 25:1 we read, 'in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim son of Josiah of Judah (that was the first year of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon)'. The fourth year of Jehoiakim is considered the year of judgment in the book of Jeremiah. This year coincides with the ascent of Nebuchadrezzar, and this reference is one way of bringing this out. This particular instance

62 Though he seems very close to arguing in a similar way, R. CARROLL, in: Synchronic Deconstructions of Jeremiah: Diachrony to the Rescue? 48-49, does not seem to want to admit that this tension in the portrayal of Babylon can be resolved by a synchronic reading. I think his idea of what a synchronic reading is may be somewhat inflexible, and that a *syntopic* reading is confused with synchronic. The book of Jeremiah can be read in a way that makes sense, if one includes the possibility of several different points of view, and that synchronic does not have to mean a flash frame split second point in time, but a reading that keeps several significant points in time together at the same time.

introduces the summary of Jeremiah's career in chapter 25, which is followed by the pronouncement of judgment on Judah. Babylon will destroy Judah and all the surrounding nations. This text is one of the two where Nebuchadrezzar is called servant of YHWH.

In Jer 32:1 a word to Jeremiah is introduced as coming from YHWH in the 'tenth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar'. It goes on to add, 'At that time the army of the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was confined in the court of the guard that was in the palace of the king of Judah, where King Zedekiah of Judah had confined him'. An interesting relationship is drawn up here. King Zedekiah is besieged by Nebuchadrezzar and Jeremiah the prophet is 'besieged' by Zedekiah. Yet, at this time of siege and powerlessness for Judah, when the reign of Nebuchadrezzar and his action seem to overshadow any independent action on the part of the Judean king, when all King Zedekiah can say is to ask his imprisoned prophet why he is preaching victory on behalf of Babylon and capture for Zedekiah, this is the time when Jeremiah gives his curious answer about buying a field in Anatoth. What is clear in this passage is that it is YHWH pulling the strings. He is acting both in terms of the monarchy in Judah and the empire in Babylon and he is determining the present and the future. He is speaking his message to Jeremiah who, despite being imprisoned, is serving as the mouthpiece of YHWH. He is speaking to a seemingly powerless king, but nonetheless directing his message to that king. Zedekiah was installed by Nebuchadrezzar. He is king of Judah, but by extension. The extension of a line between Jerusalem and Babylonia has begun to be clearly drawn.

Another example of a dual chronological reference to the king of Babylon is in 46:2, where the oracle against Egypt is introduced with a reference to King Nebuchadrezzar's defeat of Pharaoh Neco at Carchemish 'in the fourth year of King Jehoiakim, son of Josiah of Judah'.

The book also includes other references to acts of Nebuchadrezzar or Babylon that serve to indicate time, such as Jer 29:1: '…whom Nebuchadrezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon. This was after King Jeconiah, and the queen mother, the court officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the artisans, and the smiths had departed from Jerusalem'. In this chapter, as we saw above, Zedekiah is sending a delegation to Nebuchadrezzar, with Jeremiah's words to the exiles. In a way, the word of YHWH is being spoken to the people under both kings.

The dual chronologies appear with Zedekiah, the last king, and with Jehoiakim and that fated year of 605, the year that the judgment

begins. The beginning of Nebuchadrezzar's reign coincides with the year in which judgment over Judah begins. The dual chronologies appear at important structural junctions in the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah 25 forms the conclusion of the first part of Jeremiah and is a redactionally important chapter. Chapter 32 presents the vision promising future restoration, simultaneously set in the year of the downfall of Jerusalem.

Jeremiah 46 opens the oracles against the nations with the oracle against Egypt, the first kingdom that Nebuchadrezzar defeated, signaling the beginning of the end. In several of the oracles against nations, reference to king Nebuchadrezzar continues to be a redactional tool for framing and introducing the oracles by referring to acts of Nebuchadrezzar in much the same way as the example in 29:1 above.

Elsewhere in the Bible, we find chronological references to kings other than Judean and Israelite kings in Ezra 1:1-2, 6:16-22 (king of Assyria), Hag 1:1 and Zech 7:1 (king of Persia). Ezra 1:1 is actually an excellent example of how the shift of the locus from Jerusalem to 'the Empire' has already been completed. It is obvious in this text that YHWH can speak through any king, and does speak from a king of the Empire.

In Haggai and Zechariah, the location of the prophet is back in Judah, but the word of YHWH is now coming to prophets in the year of the imperial king, just as it came to prophets in the past during the reigns of Israelite and Judean kings. The shift has already taken place, and is now taken for granted.

A final feature to examine regarding the institution of the monarchy in Judah in relation to Babylon is the various types of information regarding its end, as well as promises that the royal house will prevail. Zedekiah and the royal house both end and do not end in the book of Jeremiah. Sometimes the end is not the end.

The definitive end of the Davidic lineage is pronounced on Shallum (Jehoahaz) in Jer 22:11-12, with a death in captivity, and that he will never return to the land. Jehoiakim is in Jer 22:18-19 condemned to a donkey's burial. Further, after he coolly burns the scroll, he receives the following message of judgment, 'Therefore thus says the LORD concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah: He shall have no one to sit upon the throne of David, and his dead body shall be cast out to the heat by day and the frost by night', (Jer 36:30). Jehoiakin is severely condemned to death in captivity in Jer 22:24-27, and promised no future heir, 'Record this man as childless…none of his offspring shall succeed in sitting on the throne of David and ruling again in Judah', (22:30). And, finally, according to the narrative of the fall of Jerusalem, (Jer 39:6; 52:10), Zedekiah's sons are killed at Riblah.

At the same time, the book of Jeremiah contains promises of a future for the Davidic lineage. In Jer 23:5-8 and 33:14-16 we find promises of future reign by a 'righteous Branch' of David, and life in the land. In Jer 33:17-22, we read, 'David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel…'. The only exception, according to 31:36, is if there is no more night and day, 'only then could my covenant with my servant David be broken, so that he would not have a son to reign on his throne…', and hearkening back to the promise to Abraham in Genesis 15, the number of offspring of 'my servant David' is likened to the stars in heaven and the sand on the sea. All of these three mentions of David and monarchy are paralleled by mentions of the Levites and the cult, and their restoration.[63] Finally, there is the hint of the future redemption of Jehoiakin in Jer 52:31-33.[64] What seems to be perfectly clear is that in the book of Jeremiah, the end of Jerusalem, the monarchy and the temple, are not the end. The portrayal of the dynamics of YHWH's dealings with Jerusalem and with Babylon, including his changing alliances, is one way that the writers of Jeremiah were able to deal with their experience of the loss of the monarchy and the temple. They were able to work out a way to keep the connection with the past prophetic traditions, and interpret these in their own time. By allowing for the earthly king representing YHWH to be loosened from its mooring in Jerusalem, so to say, the end is not the end, and there is a way for the future.

In the book of Jeremiah, the location of the center of power is deconstructed and obfuscated, thereby preparing the acceptance of a location outside Judah. One other way that this process of deconstruction and confusion is brought about is through the way that the last kings are portrayed. Jehoiakim is considered a bad king by the writers of Jeremiah; it is in his reign that the year of judgment falls (the fourth year of Jehoiakim). He is defeated by Nebuchadrezzar. Jehoiakin, his son and the last king of the Davidic line, only lasts three months before he gives in to Babylon. For this he receives a pension and is taken care of. Jehoiakin is portrayed ambivalently in this regard. The transfer of power has begun to take place, with the Judean king

63 How can STULMAN say that the old institutions are rejected in the vision of the new? See STULMAN, Order Amid Chaos, 67, 78-81.

64 J. PAKKALA, Zedekiah's Fate and the Dynastic Succession, JBL 125/3, 2006, 443-452, sees evidence of a historical struggle for dynastic legitimacy between Zedekiah and Jehoiakin in the various contradictory attitudes toward the fate of Zedekiah and Jehoiakin in both Jeremiah and 2 Kings. Though I do not necessarily agree with his conclusions about the historical circumstances that may or may not lie behind these texts, his observations about the tensions in the portrayals of these kings are accurate.

present in Babylon, though un-free and placed under conditions dictated by Babylon. Zedekiah, the last king, is appointed by Babylon, yet located in Judah. Where is royal Judean power located in the book of Jeremiah? It is definitely Jerusalem, but the Judean power center is also consistently undermined throughout the book of Jeremiah.

One clear example is Jer 29, where Babylon is described as the ideal city in terms similar to the ideal existence in *the land*, as we saw above. Just as Nebuchadrezzar is described in terms of the ideal Judean king when he is called servant of YHWH (Jer 25:9), the city of Babylon is described in terms of the ideal existence in the land. This blurs the distinctive nature of Jerusalem/Judah as the place that is privileged.

With a de-centered Judah, Babylon becomes the metaphor for the new imperial center, whether it is historical Babylon, Persia, a Hellenized Syria, Egypt, or Rome. The type of literary mechanism that led to this identification is also found in the book of Jeremiah. One example is Jer 29:14, where the people in the *Diaspora* and those in exile in Babylon become identified. In this case, Babylon becomes 'a metaphor for displacement from one's homeland, and at the same time the place from which people will return'.[65]

One of JOHN HILL's main points is that the book of Jeremiah conveys an understanding of the exile as unended, and that living in Judah after the Babylonian conquest was understood as living in exile by some groups in the post-exilic community. HILL's findings support the ideas I have suggested in this study. And this investigation of Babylon in Jeremiah has rendered a way of reading the book of Jeremiah as a result of that process of coming to terms with the loss of the monarchy and the land, and the changes that this loss brought to prophecy and the understanding of the correspondence between the heavenly realm and the earthly realm.

65 HILL, Friend or Foe?, 157.

The Priests and the Temple Cult in the Book of Jeremiah

LENA-SOFIA TIEMEYER

Introduction

This paper explores the attitudes towards the priests and the temple cult as expressed in the oracular material in the final form of the book of Jeremiah.[1] Accordingly, we shall not seek to determine when exactly a given passage that speaks about the priests was written. Rather, we shall differentiate between those passages that purportedly describe the conditions prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC, regardless of whether they are written retrospectively or not, and those passages that look beyond the destruction and describe the future of the priesthood. At the same time, we shall not loose sight of the historical development of the text. Assuming a final redaction of the book at some point in the late sixth or early fifth century,[2] we shall thus bear in mind the possibility that the portrayals of the priests may reflect post-exilic rather than pre-exilic conditions, and that any conflicting views of the priests may stem from multiple authorship.

Few scholars have investigated the attitudes towards the priests within the book of Jeremiah, having focused instead on the polemics

1 As the scope of this study is by necessity limited, I have chosen to refrain from discussing the narrative sections of the book of Jeremiah. It is my hope to incorporate a discussion of these passages in greater detail in a future study. Moreover, and for the same reason of space limitations, I use the term 'priest' indiscriminately throughout this paper although I am aware of the possibility that each textual strand of the book of Jeremiah may use the term in different ways. It is, for example, possible that some texts may limit their use of the term 'priest' to denote only those priests that served at the altar, thus excluding those that primarily taught (cf. Lev 10:10-11; Deut 33:10; Ezek 7:26; 44:23; Mic 3:11; Ezra 7:10; Neh 8:1-8; 2 Chr 15:3), or to denote only the Jerusalem priesthood to the exclusion of those priests that originally belonged to the rural shrines.

2 The last date mentioned is 560 BC (2 Kgs 25:27-30; cf. Jer 52:31-34). R.P. CARROLL, Jeremiah, OTL, 1986, 79, argues that the likely influence of the exilic Babylonian community on the construction of parts of the Jeremiah tradition suggests a fifth century date.

against the prophets.[3] MEYER, for example, maintains that the priests are always, in both the texts that he considers to be Jeremianic and those that he regards as stemming from the Deuteronomistic redaction, found in the shadow of the prophets who form Jeremiah's main opponents.[4] As the present study will demonstrate, however, the book of Jeremiah takes an interest in the priests that is independent from its interest in the prophets. Foremost, we shall discover how the priests are being held culpable in their *role as teachers and leaders of the people* rather than as cultic officials of the temple. Although several oracles condemn the priests, these same oracles never condemn the priests alone but always together with at least one other group of leaders. Likewise, although the cult is being critiqued, the focus of the critique is in the majority of the cases on the people's trust in its ultimate salvific abilities rather than on the cult in and by itself. We shall further see that the book of Jeremiah distinguishes between past and future priests. On the one hand, texts that betray a critical disposition towards the priests and/or the cult are found in passages that speak about the pre-exilic situation. They claim that the disobedience of the people and their leaders to God rendered their cultic endeavours useless. On the other hand, texts that view the priests and/or the cult positively are found in passages that speak about the future. They envision the cult and its personnel as functioning as God meant them to do.

In this context, it must be stated that I do not see a sharp dichotomy between the priests and the prophets in the book of Jeremiah. First, the persona of Jeremiah combines the two offices of priest and prophet. Secondly, the book of Jeremiah often presents the prophets and the priests together as a two-tiered religious leadership. I relate instead to the critique of the priests and the prophets in the book of Jeremiah as attempts at reform by a fellow prophet-priest.

Our investigation falls into two parts. First, we shall look at the ways in which the oracular material in the book of Jeremiah deals with *the priests*: (1) references to the prophets and the priests together (5:31; 6:13//8:10; 14:18; 23:11-12, 33-34), (2) references to the priests, the prophets and other groups of leaders (Jer 2:8; 2:26-27; 4:9; 8:1-2; 18:18; 32:32), (3) references to the priests and other leaders but without the

3 An important exception is C. PATTON, Layers of Meaning: Priesthood in Jeremiah MT, in: L. L. GRABBE and A. OGDEN BELLIS (eds.) The Priests in the Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets, 2004, 149-176. She focuses more on the narrative passages, and on how the rhetoric of the text conveys ideologies of priesthood. She further argues that the final form of the book of Jeremiah projects a unified assessment of the priesthood.

4 I. MEYER, Jeremia und die falsche Propheten, 1977, 98.

prophets (Jer 1:17-19; 34:19), and finally (4) references to the priests alone (Jer 31:14; 33:18, 21). Secondly, we shall discuss the way the oracular material deals with the cult: (5) negative estimations (Jer 7:11-15; 11:15; 7:4; 11:15; 14:11; 6:20), and (6) positive estimations (Jer 17:19-27).

1. Critique of the priests and the prophets together

A large number of oracles in the book of Jeremiah target the priests together with the prophets. We shall here begin with four passages that restrict their target to the priests and the prophets alone (Jer 5:31; 6:13//8:10; 14:18; 23:11-12, 33-34). Most of them criticize the priests and the prophets for failing in their role as leaders – they have failed to guide the people according to God's will (5:31), for practicing falsehood and for lulling the people into safe security (6:13-14).

1.1. Jeremiah 5:31

The priests and the prophets are mentioned in Jer 5:31, a statement that can be constructed as either a report by Jeremiah to God or a meditation by God.[5] Jer 5:30-31 is probably an independent unit, unattached to the preceding section (vv. 26-30).[6] The preceding oracles with its critique of the 'wicked men' (vv. 26-29) is therefore unlikely to be connected with the critique of the priests and the prophets in verse 31. There is no consensus as to its dating, with suggestions ranging from 601 BC[7] to the Persian period.[8]

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5 See the discussion in W. McKANE, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Jeremiah, 1, ICC, 1986, 137. He maintains that v. 31 is presented as Jeremiah's own words.

6 E.g. E.W. NICHOLSON, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah. Chapters 1-25, CBC, 1973, 65; F.L. HOSSFELD and I. MEYER, Prophet gegen Prophet. Eine Analyse der alttestamentlichen Texte zum Thema wahre und falsche Propheten, Biblische Beiträge 9, 1973, 65; T.W. OVERHOLT, The Threat of Falsehood. A Study in the Theology of the Book of Jeremiah, SBT, 2nd series, 16, 1970, 73; W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 1. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 1-25, 1986, 200; McKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 136. In contrast, see J. MILGROM, The Date of Jeremiah, Chapter 2, JNES 14, 1955, 67, who assumes continuity of Jer 5:26-31 and thus interprets שקר in v. 31 to be purely moral in character in view of the preceding vv. 26-28.

7 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 200.

8 B. DUHM, Das Buch Jeremia, KHAT 11, 1901, 64, sees vv. 30-31 as roughly contemporary with Isaiah 56-66. He is tentatively followed by CARROLL, Jeremiah, 190.

The prophets are here charged with prophesying falsely[9], the priests are described as ירדו על ידיהם, and the people are said to support their leaders wholeheartedly. Most scholars derive the word ירדו from the root רדה = 'rule, dominate'[10] and understand the possessive pronoun on ידיהם as referring to the prophets. Accordingly, the priests are accused of ruling in accordance with the *prophets*' directives.[11] This interpretation, however, is problematic on several accounts. First, there is no evidence from elsewhere that the priests took their cues from the prophets. Secondly, the possessive pronoun on ידיהם is more likely to refer to the same subject as the preceding verb, i.e. to the priests. It is therefore preferable to translate the phrase as 'the priests rule according to their (own) hands'.[12] The ancient translations offer additional insight. The LXX and the V support that the hands are indeed the priests, but their translations ('the priests applaud with their hands') also indicate agreement between the priests and the prophets. The readings of the Peshitta ('they grasp their hands') and of the Targum ('they support them') further emphasize collaboration between the two groups, as they probably understand 'their hands' as referring to those of the prophets.

Jer 5:31 is therefore best read as emphasizing the *combined* responsibility of the prophets and the priests for bringing judgement upon Judah, although the prophets are held to be the dominant partner. The prophets are speaking falsely and the priests are in agreement with them, as neither listen to God but rather give instructions following their own human ideas.[13] The choice of the verb רדה is further important in this context. As it is a verb without explicit cultic connotations (in contrast to the verb ירה = 'to teach rule', cf. Hag 2:11), the priests are accused of having 'dominated' the people. The critique is thus levelled

9 See McKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 136, for the adverbial sense of בשקר. Some scholars understand the word בשקר as indicating 'falsehood' or even idolatry (e.g. HOSSFELD and MEYER, Prophet gegen Prophet, 65).

10 There is no reason to emend the reading to יורו or הורו, i.e. 'to teach' as Rudolph, *Jeremia*, 38, does. For an alternative derivation from רדה II = 'to scrape' (cf. Jdc 14,9), see W.L. HOLLADAY, 'The Priest Scrape Out on their Hands', Jeremiah V 31, VT 15, 1965, 111-113. His suggestion, however, fails to convince as it is difficult to see how a root meaning 'to scrape out' came to mean 'to reject'.

11 E.g. A.R. JOHNSON, The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel, 1962, 64, J.R. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 1-20, AB 21A, 1999), 406.410, NICHOLSON, Jeremiah, 1, 31, who translates 'priests go hand in hand with them', I. MEYER, Jeremia und die falschen Propheten, 1977, 93-99, with cited bibliography, and HOSSFELD and MEYER, Prophet gegen Prophet, 65.

12 Cf. W. RUDOLPH, Jeremia, HAT 12, 1958, 37-38.

13 See, e.g. OVERHOLT, Threat of Falsehood, 73, footnote 6.

against their role as leaders of the people rather than as cultic functionaries.[14]

1.2. Jeremiah 6:13//8:10

The priests and the prophets are again mentioned in Jer 6:13/8:10. Jer 6:13-15 (// 8:10aβ-12) forms a textual unity[15] that possibly extends to verses 12-15[16] or to verses 9-15.[17] Verse 13a claims that the society *as a whole* is fraudulent, from the lowliest to the highest,[18] while 13b limits the target to the leadership – the priest and the prophet – and accuses them of 'doing/ practicing falsehood' (עשה שקר). In contrast to Jer 5:31 (above – נבאו שקר), nothing implies here that the prophets are accused of false prophecies.[19] 13b is therefore better understood as a reference to more general acts, committed by the religious leadership, that were considered to be destructive.[20]

As no new subject is introduced and as the 'people' are referred to as a group of people distinct from the target audience, the priests and the prophets remain the subject in the following verses 14-15.[21] Some scholars maintain that the prophets alone are the subject of verses 14-15 as the call to *shalom* is more often associated with the prophets (cf. 4:10),[22] and as the idea of 'shame' (v. 15 – הבישו) is more fitting a prophetic audience.[23] These arguments, however, are weak. First, although prophets are often cited as proclaiming 'peace', the word *shalom* is here better translated as 'well-being' in accordance with the medical meta-

14 Cf. PATTON, Layers of Meaning, 154-155.

15 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 428-429.

16 See CARROLL, Jeremiah, 197-198, who argues that vv. 12-15 is an independent unit added to verse 11 as it expands the judgment in v. 11 by elaborating on the fate of the community and explaining why everybody must suffer. See also J. BRIGHT, Jeremiah, AB 21, 1965, 50, who, although he recognizes the repetitious character of vv. 12-15, argues that they are original in their position here as they fit the context well.

17 RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 41; BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 49-50; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 211; MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 144.

18 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 216, convincingly argues that to 'take his cut' (כלו בוצע בצע) implies taking a share (*baksheesh*) from all transactions. Alternatively, HOSSFELD and MEYER, Prophet gegen Prophet, 67, connect it with the actions of Eli's sons as recorded in 1 Sam 8:3.

19 *Contra* OVERHOLT, Threat of Falsehood, 75-76.

20 Cf. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 216.

21 OVERHOLT, Threat of Falsehood, 74-79; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 198; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 430.

22 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 216.

23 E.g. MEYER, Jeremia, 109-110.

phors of the verse.[24] Secondly, the textual flow suggests that both the priests and the prophet are indicted. Thirdly, although the concept of 'shame' is attested predominantly throughout the prophetic corpus, it does not target prophets to any larger extent. The priests and the prophets are thus accused together of deceiving the people by failing to point out their sins and instead predicting well-being.[25] They are furthermore charged with shamelessness even though they had committed an 'abomination' (v. 15). In fact, they have no awareness of having betrayed a trust.[26] It is unclear what the 'abomination' is. Elsewhere in the book of Jeremiah it is used primarily to denote idolatry, in particular idolatry committed by priests and prophets (Jer 2:7; 32:34-35, 44:4, 22), although some passages testify to a wider use (Jer 7:10). In the present context, the word is most likely referring to the failure of the religious leadership of bringing the people's sins to their attention. We may therefore conclude that, as in Jer 5:31, the priests, as well as the prophets, are accused of being irresponsible religious leaders rather than of failings within the cultic realm.

1.3. Jeremiah 14:18

Jer 14:18 contains yet another reference to the priests and the prophets. There is little agreement as to the extent of its context, and any perceived unity of a longer context is likely to be secondary.[27] Nonetheless, verse 17 clearly begins a new unity,[28] which means that verse 18 should not be interpreted in the light of the preceding critique of the prophets (vv. 14-16).

The Hebrew of verse 18 is unclear. Two interconnected issues influence the interpretation: the meaning of the *Paal* perfect of סחר, and the syntactical position of the phrase ולא ידעו in relation to the preceding words. The *Paal* סחר appears mostly as a particle in the sense of 'merchant', or as a finite form of disputed meaning (Gen 34:10, 21; 42:34). Its

24 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 147.

25 J.P. HYATT, The Book of Jeremiah. Introduction and Exegesis, IB 5, 1956, 861. See also CARROLL, Jeremiah, 198.

26 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 147.

27 E.g. DUHM, Jeremia, 127, sees Jer 14:1-15:9 as a redactional unity; BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 102.

28 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 328-336, limits the immediate context to 14:17-15:4, LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 710-711, treats 14:17-19b as a separate piece, and CARROLL, Jeremiah, 315-316, interprets only vv. 17-18 together, seeing both verses as editorial, possibly seeking to belittle priests and prophets.

basic meaning may be either 'to trade'[29] or 'to travel in a circle'.[30] In general, those scholars advocating a trade-related meaning of the verb separate between סחרו אל ארץ on the one hand and ולא ידעו on the other, and they argue that the priests and the prophets are peddling *around* the country, understanding little.[31] The waw preceding לא ידעו supports this interpretation while the preposition אל speaks against it. In contrast, those scholars who detect no aspects of trade in the verb סחר tend to disregard the waw and to emphasize the preposition. They translate accordingly that the priests and the prophets are wandering *to* a country which they do not know.[32] LXX supports this reading as it also seems to read לא rather than ולא. Other interpretations have also been voiced, but none has won general acceptance.[33]

In my view, an independent reading of the last clause 'and they do not know' is preferable, as there are other examples of reference to priests who 'do not know' (2 Kgs 17:26-28; Jer 2:8; 5:31; Mal 2:6-9).[34] Furthermore, the situation described in Jer 14:18 is comparable with that depicted in Lam 4:13-15 where priests and prophets walk around blind in the street, blamed for the destruction of Jerusalem as they let innocent blood fill the streets.[35] Rather than criticizing the priesthood, Jer 14:18 is therefore better understood as a prediction/description of the situation of the religious leaders following the Neo-Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, emphasizing that the punishment fits the crime: as they 'did not know' how to advise the people so that they could have avoided the catastrophe beforehand, now they all wander about 'without knowing'. We thus see yet again that, as in Jer 6:13/8:10, the priests are blamed for their deficiency in their teaching duties rather

29 E.g. C.H. GORDON, Abraham and the Merchants of Ura, JNES 17, 1958, 29, W.F. ALBRIGHT, Abraham the Hebrew. A New Archaeological Interpretation, BASOR 163, 1961, 44.

30 A. SPEISER, The Word SHR in Genesis and Early Hebrew Movements, BASOR 164, 1961, 23-28, with cited bibliography.

31 See DUHM, Jeremia, 130, who reads את instead of אל, as the verb סחר elsewhere governs the accusative, A. WEISER, Das Buch Jeremia, ATD 20/21, 1966, 120.126, and RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 92, who all emend the אל to את. See also HYATT, Jeremiah, 934-935; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 316, with variation.

32 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 713. See also A.W. STREANE, The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah together with the Lamentations, CB, 1903, 113.

33 See, for example, the interpretations by D. WINTON THOMAS, A Note on ולא ידעו in Jeremiah xiv 18, JTS 39, 1938, 273-274, and HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 437-438.

34 See further L.-S. TIEMEYER, Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage. Post-Exilic Prophetic Critique of the Priesthood, FAT II/20, 2006, 113-136.

35 L.-S. TIEMEYER, The Question of Indirect Touch – Lam 4,14; Ezek 44,19 and Hag 2,12-13, Biblica, 2006, 67-71.

than for any cultic failure. Furthermore, this priestly and prophetic failure brought about the destruction of Jerusalem.

1.4. Jeremiah 23:11 and 23:33-40

The priests and the prophets are finally also being criticized together in Jer 23:11 and 33-34. Jer 23:9-40 is a collection of shorter, partly self-contained, oracles.[36] The headline in 9aα (לנביאים), an editorial addition,[37] implies that the oracles are chiefly addressed to the prophets. There are, however, verses mentioning also the priests (vv. 11, 33-34), and its wider context is that of critique of the leadership in general (vv. 1-4).

Verse 11 states both prophet and priest are profane/godless (כי גם נביא גם כהן חנפו, cf. 14:18b syntactically), indeed, God has found their wickedness in the temple (גם בביתי מצאתי רעתם). 'Their wickedness' (רעתם) is left unspecified, although it is in my opinion plausible to connect it with the adulterers of verse 10.[38] This verse is part of the subunit of verses 9-12. It is often viewed as a later interpolation,[39] serving to transform the original oracle in verses 10, 12 from targeting the people of Judah to addressing the religious leadership. Other scholars consider it to be integral to the passage, regarding the initial גם of verse 11 as marking the movement from the description of the behaviour of the community as a whole (v. 10) to a description of the behaviour of the religious leaders in particular.[40] In any case, the priests and the prophets are criticized together and there is no reason to assume exclusive focus on the latter. In fact, given the specific reference to the temple, the opposite, if anything, would be more likely.[41] As verse 11

36 RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 137; MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 568.

37 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 451.

38 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 571-572, gives an overview of various scholarly suggestions, ranging from idolatry, via corruption of intention and action to moral decay and breakdown of sexual morality and the disintegration of the institution of marriage. For the discussion whether this verse refers to pre- or post-Josianic practices, see NICHOLSON, Jeremiah, 1, 194, and J.R. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah 21-36. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, AB 21b, 2004, 179.183.

39 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 452-453.

40 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 571. See also HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 628.

41 *Contra* HOSSFELD and MEYER, Prophet gegen Prophet, 75, who argue that no particular priestly misdeed is meant here. Instead, the priests are mentioned here because Jeremiah stems from a priestly family but did not receive any understanding from them, and because, as he is speaking about the misdeeds of holy places, it is fitting that the priests, as responsible for them, are mentioned. See also MEYER, Jeremia, 118.

ends with the phrase 'oracles of YHWH', the predicted punishment in verse 12 probably includes not only the priests and the prophets but also those addressed in verse 10-12.[42] To conclude, regardless of whether verse 11 is original or a later interpolation, the final text blames the priests and the prophets alike for being less than holy and/or for committing adultery in places including God's temple.

The priests, alongside the prophets, are targeted once more in 23:9-40, namely in verses 33-40 (33aα.34aα). Owing to the perceived inconsistency between the word-play of verse 33 and the following oracles in verses 34-40, most scholars distinguish between verse 33 (Jeremianic) and verses 34-40 (redactional, post-Malachi).[43] This view, however, disregards the obvious possibility that verse 33 may be uttered ironically.[44] Most scholars, with some significant exceptions,[45] further regard verse 33aα as a later gloss, taken from verse 34 owing to its (bad) style.[46] The original oracle (33aβ-bβ) would then be a simple pun on the word 'burden', i.e. a prophetic oracle (cf. Isa 13:1; 15:1; 17:1; 19:1; 21:1, 11, 13; 22:1; 23:1; 30:6; Nah 1:1; Hag 1:1; Sach 9:1; 12:1; Mal 1:1)[47] directed to the people in general. This oracle was transformed to target the religious leadership, criticizing the prophets in particular but also the priests for claiming the ability to discern God's will.[48]

The final text of Jeremiah 23:9-40 thus refers to the priests and the prophets twice, and both cases fuse what are normally viewed as distinctly priestly or prophetic tasks. On the one hand, verse 11 implies that both priests and prophets held functions in the temple. On the other hand, verses 33-34 indicate that both priests and prophets were normally responsible for a 'burden', i.e. a *prophetic oracle*. Interestingly, the border between the priests and the prophets are blurred, and there is an overlap between the two professional groups as to their work

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42 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 452.453; MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 572, *contra* HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 627-629, and LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 183.

43 E.g. DUHM, Jeremia, 194-195; RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 143-144; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 649; D.L. PETERSON, Late Israelite Prophecy, SBLMS 23, 1977, 28.

44 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 599.602-603.

45 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 213-214.217, argues that the style of vv. 34-40 stands in continuity with what we know of from other Jeremianic passages.

46 E.g. RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 142; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 647; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 476. See also PETERSON, Late Israelite Prophecy, 32, who dates this passage to the late sixth or the early fifth century.

47 See the detailed discussion by W. MCKANE, משא in Jeremiah 23 33-40, Prophecy. Essays Presented to Georg Fohrer on his Sixty-fifth Birthday 6 September 1980, BZAW 150, 1980, 35-54 (esp. 40).

48 See especially PETERSEN, Late Israelite Prophecy, 27-33, but also MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 599-600.603-604; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 479-480.

areas. Furthermore, both passages emphasize the responsibility towards and the crimes against the people of Judah. Although verse 11, by using the *Paal* of חנף, implies a sin towards God's holiness, 'their wickedness' is likely to be connected with adultery, i.e. a sin towards *fellow humans*. Furthermore, verses 33-34 stress that *the people* have been unduly burdened by the words of their leaders. We can thus conclude that Jer 23:11, 33 as do Jer 5:31; 6:13//8:10; 14:18, target the general failure of the priests and the prophets to be good and responsible religious leaders of the people of Judah. They are accordingly held to be the chief responsible for God's punishment of Judah (cf. Jer 23:39).

2. Critique of the priests, the prophets and other groups of leaders

In addition to the aforementioned oracles that mentioned the priests together with the prophets, several other oracles mention the priests together also with other groups of leaders (Jer 2:8 [and 18:18]; 2:26-27; 4:9-10; 8:1-2; 32:32). Three of these oracles accuse four fixed categories of leaders: the priests, the prophets, the nobles and the kings (2:26-27; 8:1-2; 32:32). The critique concerns again the priests' failure to lead the people (Jer 2:8), but also other areas are targeted, such as idolatry (Jer 2:26-27) and astral worship (Jer 8:1-2).

2.1. Jeremiah 2:8 and 18:18

The priests are mentioned in Jer 2:8. Jer 2:4-9 is a smaller unit within the larger collection of 2:1-4:4. There is no consensus as to its dating, with suggestions ranging from early Jeremianic material[49] to exilic redactional material.[50] Notably, Hossfeld and Meyer argue that the type of polemics against the leadership as found in Jer 2:8 is typical of the attempt of the first redaction of the book of Jeremiah to blame the fall of Jerusalem upon its pre-exilic leaders (8:1; 13:13; 17:25; 32:32; 44:17, 21).[51]

Jer 2:8-9 contains a fourfold accusation against the priests, the teachers of the Torah, the shepherds and the prophets. The identity of the teachers of the Torah (תפשי התורה) is unclear. Some scholars identify

49 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 66-67; RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 11.

50 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 122.

51 HOSSFELD and MEYER, Prophet gegen Prophet, 61.

them with wisdom teachers or scribes,[52] while others identify them with the Levites and/or with the priests.[53] The evidence points, in my view, in the latter direction. First, from a negative angle, although Jer 8:8 suggests the existence of scribes distinct from the priests, their main task seems to have been to *write down* instruction rather than to teach it. Jer 8:8 does not therefore contribute significantly to our understanding of Jer 2:8. Secondly, more positively, the concept of Torah is elsewhere connected with the priests (e.g. Jer 18:18; Ezek 7:26). Thirdly, it is likely that Jeremiah was influenced by Hosea's critique of the priests for not caring about the Torah (Hos 4:6).[54] Finally, the prophets commonly commented on the priestly neglect of their teaching duties.[55] This means that the priests are accused twice in Jer 2:8: first for not asking for God, and secondly for not knowing him.[56] As knowledge of God is the fundamental prerequisite for correct teaching, the two belong together, depicting a situation where correct teaching cannot be found.

To conclude, rather than focusing on one specific kind of leaders, Jer 2:8-9 implies that all leaders, in their various specialities, are defunct. In the specific case of the priests, they are again not faulted for their cultic activities, but are instead charged with having failed in their teaching duty towards the people.

As Jer 18:18 is strongly reminiscent of Jer 2:8, I have chosen to incorporate a discussion of this verse in the present context. Jer 18:18-23 consists of a quote of Jeremiah's opponents advising others not to listen to Jeremiah (v. 18), and of a subsequent lament where Jeremiah pleads with God to listen to him (vv. 19-23).[57]

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52 M. WEINFELD, לתפיסת החוק בישראל ומחוצה לו, Bet Miqra 8, 1964, 58-63; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 261.

53 BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 15; RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 13; J.P. HYATT, Torah in the Book of Jeremiah, JBL 60, 1941, 382-386, where he argues that Jeremiah opposes those who interpreted the law rather than following God's inspired word as the prophets did. He further connects the תפשי התורה here with the ספרים in Jer 8:8 and the Torah with the book of Deuteronomy.

54 See further MEYER, Jeremia, 74.

55 TIEMEYER, Priestly Rites, 115-122.

56 The same idea is expressed in 1 Sam 2:12 (cf. chapter 10), where part of the failure of Eli's two sons Hophni and Phinehas is their failure to know God. They are described as 'worthless fellows' who 'do not know the Lord' (לא ידעו את ה'). Again, the author uses the root ידע to describe this lack of knowledge. In this case, the lack of knowledge refers to the two priests' failure to maintain their relationship with God. See further P.K. MCCARTER, Jr., I Samuel, AB 8, 1980, 82.

57 RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 113-115; WEISER, Jeremia, 156-157.

As the preceding 18:13-17 is only loosely connected with 18:18-23,[58] the speakers in verse 18 are best identified with the people in the preceding verse 11.[59] These speakers maintain that Jeremiah's admonitions are redundant because the existing religious leadership (the priests, the wise, and the prophets) is functioning.[60] In this manner, although we are not dealing with an exact correlation, 18:18 serves as a counterclaim to Jer 2:8, emphasizing that the established religious leaders stand firm and are secure in their respective speciality.[61]

2.2. Jeremiah 2:26-27; 4:9; 8:1-3; 32:32 – the fourfold accusation

Jer 2:26-27; 8:1-3 and 32:32 accuse four fixed categories of leaders of idolatry – the priests, the prophets, the nobles and the kings – together with the general population. As we shall see, these verses emphasize that the whole people of Judah, including its leadership, will be responsible for the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

2.2.1. Jeremiah 2:26 and 32:32

Beginning with Jer 2:26, there are good stylistic arguments for viewing the reference to the four professional categories in 26b (המה מלכיהם שריהם וכהניהם ונביאיהם) as a later gloss: it disturbs the connection between בית ישראל (v. 26a) and אמרים (v. 27a),[62] and it is difficult to imagine that the statement in verse 27 would have been said by *all* the different professions in verse 26b.[63] In the final text of Jer 2:26-28, however, the whole house of Israel, including its priests, kings, nobles and prophets, are accused of idolatry (v. 26), as they are cited calling a tree their father and a stone their mother (v. 27). The tree is probably a reference to the goddess Asherah whose cultic symbol was the tree, and the reference to a stone or rock is elsewhere used as a metaphor for God the father (e.g. Isa 51:1-2). What is thus derided are beliefs held to be unorthodox by

58 DUHM, Jeremia, 156; WEISER, Jeremia, 156-157; RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 113-114; MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 435. For a different view, see *contra* LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 824, who maintains that v. 18 as an editorial insertion interrupting the poetry of vv. 13-23.

59 *Contra* LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 826, who, seeing v. 18 as self-standing, argues that 'they' refers to the people within the verse itself, i.e. to the priests, the wise men and the prophets of Jerusalem.

60 For a comprehensive overview of the interpretations of this statement, see RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 114.

61 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 437.

62 RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 18.

63 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 48.

the book of Jeremiah. At the same time, as nobody really speaks to wood and stone (cf. Jer 3:9; Hos 4:12), the use here is probably ironic, aiming to mock the religious behaviour of the people and their leadership.[64] It thus stands alongside the religious polemic in Jer 23:11 (above).

There is also a general agreement among critical scholars as to the editorial origin of Jer 32:30-35. Most scholars regard all of Jer 32:26-35 as stemming from the redactors of the book of Jeremiah, with verses 30-35 forming an even later addition. Although nothing in these verses is foreign to Jeremiah's thoughts, they are made up entirely of conventional expressions and are accordingly best regarded as a pastiche from genuine material from especially 19:13 and 7:30-31.[65]

As in Jer 2:26, 32:32 lists prophets, priests, kings and nobles as four categories of leaders that have angered God, alongside the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (cf. 11:2, 9; 17:25). Instead of implicating the leadership in particular[66] then, this verse functions as a merism, incorporating all the levels of the Judahite society. Furthermore, again as in Jer 2:26, the accusations levelled against the people and their leaders concern idolatry. Jer 32:30-35 claims that those accused had set up abominations in the temple in order to defile it, building high places to Baal in the Hinnon Valley, and in order to offering up their children to Molech (cf. 2 Kgs 23:10). They are also accused of having failed to learn from God's instruction (v. 33), an accusation that stands alongside the accusations concerning the priests' lack of teaching, or their incorrect teaching in Jer 2:8; 5:31 (above).

To sum up, Jer 2:26 and 32:32 are likely to be later editorial glossae, added in order to emphasize that the fall of Jerusalem was caused by the idolatry of *all the people of Judah*, including their political and religious leaders.[67]

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64 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 284-285, cf. HYATT, Jeremiah, 820.

65 See, e.g., BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 298; W.L. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah 2. A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah, Chapters 26-52, 1989, 207; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 628. MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 847-848, sees all of vv. 16-44 as redactional, but does not attribute all of them to the same redactor.

66 *Contra* MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 848,

67 *Contra* W. THIEL, Die deuteronomistische Redaktion von Jeremia 1-25, WMANT 41, 1973, 83; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 135; MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 47, who all argue that Jer 2:26 and 32:32 are Deuteronomistic *glossae* added in order to emphasize the responsibility of *certain strata* of the society for the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

2.2.2. Jeremiah 8:1-3

Jer 8:1-3 also accuses the priests, the prophets, the nobles and the kings, as well as the general population of Jerusalem. This passage is probably of a different origin than the preceding 7:29-34 although both texts deal with the reversal of normal burial and idolatry.[68] HOLLADAY suggests an exilic date, as the references to the sun, the moon and the host of heaven are found elsewhere only in Deut 4:19; 17:3; and II Kgs 23:5, passages that are suspected of being exilic additions. Moreover, he understands the critique of astral worship to indicate a Babylonian setting, and the practice of disinterment of corpses to reflect Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian practices.[69] In contrast, LUNDBOM suggests a date during the reign of Jehoiakim (609-605 BC).[70] In my view, the latter view is more convincing, as Neo-Assyrian influence can indeed be expected in pre-exilic Judah, and as there is nothing particularly exilic about worship of Asherah and astral figures.

The critique in Jer 8:1-3 concerns astral worship. The author predicts that, as a fitting result of the leaders' and the people's worship, their tombs will be desecrated and their bones will be spread out under the very same celestial bodies that they had worshipped. Given the likely identification of the Queen of Heaven, referred to in the preceding 7:18, with Asherah,[71] it is plausible that also Jer 8:1-2 refers to worship of Asherah (cf. Jer 2:26 above). To conclude, as in the final text of Jer 2:26 and 32:32 (above), Jer 8:1-3 emphasizes that the whole people of Judah, including all its leaders, were guilty of idolatry.

2.2.3. Jeremiah 4:9

Finally, kings, nobles, priests and prophets are also referred to in Jer 4:9. This verse differs in content from Jer 2:26-27; 8:1-3 and 32:32 in that it is a prediction about what will happen to these four categories of professionals on the day of destruction rather than an outright accusation against them.

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68 Cf. MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 182, who argues that the interests of chapter 7 may be in line with what the historical Jeremiah would have thought. See also LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 493. In contrast, THIEL, Deuteronomistische Redaktion, 128-134, sees all of Jer 7:1-8:3 as a sermon constructed by D, with Jer 7:30-8:3 forming a subsection thereof.

69 E.g. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 271.

70 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 502.

71 K.J.H. VRIEZEN, Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel, in: B. BECKING, M. DIJKSTRA, M.C.A. KORPEL and K.J.H. VRIEZEN (eds.), Only One God, The Biblical Seminar 77, 2001, 67-71.

In contrast to Jer 2:26 and 32:32, most scholars see Jer 4:9 as stemming from the prophet Jeremiah.[72] Notably, HOSSFELD and MEYER, who view much of the critique of the leadership in the book of Jeremiah as redactional, regard Jer 4:9 as authentically Jeremianic, serving as the prototype for the redactional passages.[73] In contrast, HOLLADAY views Jer 4:9 as stemming from the same (third Jeremianic) recension as 2:26-27 (above), dated shortly after 601 BC.[74] Finally, LUNDBOM, who has maintained Jeremianic authorship of all of Jer 2:26-27; 32:32 and 8:1-3, dates this verse to Zedekiah's reign just prior to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC.[75]

It is unclear whether verse 9 belongs with the preceding material or with the following verse 10. On the one hand, the Masoretic *petuhah* following verse 8 suggests that verses 9-10 belong together, with verse 9 as the divine oracle promising shock and surprise for the nation's leaders, while verse 10 is the response.[76] On the other hand, the change from poetry (vv. 5-9) to prose (v. 10) is a possible reason for interpreting verse 10 independently of the preceding verses.[77] Furthermore, the speaker of verse 10 identifies the four professional categories with 'this people and Jerusalem' (לעם ולירושלם), a change which might indicate a separation between verses 9 and 10. Given this ambiguity, we shall explore both possibilities.

Verse 9 declares that when God brings the enemy from the north upon Judah, the *totality* of the Judahite leadership, including both the civic and the religious leaders, will collapse.[78] This text does not really criticize the leaders but rather portrays their dismay at God's destructive actions.[79] The civic leadership (the king and the princes) will loose their courage. The priests will be made 'desolate' or 'horrified' or made to 'shudder' (ונשמו הכהנים). The same *Niphal* of the root שמם is attested in 2:12 referring to the heavens as they contemplate what the people have

72 E.g. HYATT, Jeremiah, 835, who views v. 9 as a later addition, primarily because of its opening phrase 'on that day' ביום ההוא and its eschatological flavour, but also because of its prose character. Nonetheless, as shown by HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 154, and by RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 30, this phrase is not eschatological here in the same manner as in post-exilic texts.

73 HOSSFELD and MEYER, Prophet gegen Prophet, 63.

74 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 146.152.

75 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 338-340.

76 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 334. See also HYATT, Jeremiah, 835.

77 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 93-94.

78 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 154-155.

79 Cf. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 338-339, who states that these individuals are simply unable to discern the moment, and, as a result, they are condemned to experience 'the painful consequence of indiscernment'.

done. Finally, the prophets will be 'stunned' or 'astounded' (והנביאים יתמהו – root תמה), a verb that is used similarly in Ps 48:6 in parallel with בהל = 'be in panic'. Thus, the disintegration of political leadership will be matched by the disorganized response of the religious leaders.[80]

In the case of verse 10, there are two main reading traditions. First, the LXX^{A} (καὶ εἶπαν) and the Arabic version attest to 'and they [i.e. the priests etc.] shall say'.[81] The leadership is thus so shattered by the invasion that they confess to having been deceived completely by God through the words of the prophets. Furthermore, although they are to blame, they themselves were deceived. God wished to bring disaster upon the community and accordingly blinded them who, as a result, gladly accepted the message of peace.[82] Second, the MT attests to the first person (ואמר) 'and I [i.e. Jeremiah] said'. As in the LXX, the leadership is portrayed as shattered but in the MT they are left mute. It is instead Jeremiah who expresses his dismay at God for promising peace and security.[83] Based on the content of verse 10 – speaking of promises of peace – it can be argued that verse 10 speaks about false prophets (cf. 1 Kgs 22:19-23; Ezek 14:6-11; Deut 13:1-3),[84] but this interpretation remains implicit. In any case, God is held to be the outmost responsible.

To conclude, Jer 4:9 does not criticize the priests and the other leaders outright, although it is not favourable to them either, as it points to their imminent disarray. The same idea is developed further in verse 10 through the emphasis on the leaders' incorrect understanding of their situation.

2.2.4. Summary

To sum up, Jer 2:26-27; 8:1-3 and 32:32 present the priests, together with the other three professional groups of leaders in the four-tiered Judahite leadership, as guilty of idolatry. They are never singled out as particularly worthy of blame, but they also never fade into the background while another groups of leaders are given the bulk of the blame. They are treated as one *professional* group among many other comparable such groups in pre-exilic Judah. These verses further present the general population of Judah as having participated in the idolatry. We are thus dealing with a merism, employed to emphasize the

80 McKane, Jeremiah, 1, 93.

81 See, e.g. Rudolph, Jeremiah, 30.

82 Carroll, Jeremiah, 161-162.

83 Followed by, among others, Bright, Jeremiah, 32.34; Carroll, Jeremiah, 161; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1, 150.155.

84 See, among others, Hyatt, Jeremiah, 835; Carroll, Jeremiah, 161-162.

culpability of the totality of the society. The related 4:9 stands out in that the general people are not mentioned and that the leadership are not accused of a particular sin.

All four passages further speak about a *future* catastrophe. This perspective is likely to be genuine in 4:9 and probably also in 8:1-3. In contrast, the author of 2:26 and 32:32 probably speaks in retrospective. The final form of the book of Jeremiah thus presents the totality of the Judahite leadership – priests, the prophets, the nobles and the kings – together with the people of Judah, as responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem. This emphasis on the culpability of the leadership fits well with the critique of the leadership of Judah as found in early post-exilic texts, in particular in Isa 56:9-12.[85] Therefore, if Jer 2:26 and 32:32 indeed are *glossae* from this time period, they share the same point of view as much of Isa 56-55.

3. Critique of the priests and other leaders but without the prophets (Jer 1:17-19; 34:19)

The priests are listed without the prophets but together with other groups of leaders in Jer 1:17-19 and 34:19. Much favours a post-exilic origin of Jer 1:17-19. These three verses differ from the preceding context in that they refer to the (future) opposition to Jeremiah's prophetic ministry before it has even begun. Many scholars therefore regard these verses as a later addition. CARROLL, for example, interpreting the phrase עם הארץ as a code-word for the Judahite community, maintains that these verses reflect the post-exilic strife between the exilic and the Judahite community, and that Jeremiah's opposition to them represents the exilic community's rejection of the people of Judah.[86] There are further differences between the MT and the LXX in that the latter lacks an equivalence to MT's על־כל־הארץ in 18a, and it further lacks the reference to priests in 18b ('the kings of Judah, and the princes thereof, and the people of the land'). Some scholars therefore regard the reference to priests as a later addition.[87] LUNDBOM, however, argues convincingly that the word לכהניה could have easily been overlooked by the copying scribe owing to the similar preceding word לשריה ending in the

85 See further TIEMEYER, Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage, 122-126.

86 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 109-110. For a different perspective, see also MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 23-25.

87 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 45.

same two letters. He accordingly views the MT as representing the original reading.[88]

In Jer 1:17-19, God commands Jeremiah in metaphorical language to prepare for battle.[89] God will then turn Jeremiah into a strong fortress against (ל-) the influential people of Judah, who passively but successfully will be able to resist[90] the onslaught of the kings of Judah, its nobles, its priests and 'the people of the land' (עם הארץ). The latter term can either be translated as 'landowner'/'landed gentry'[91] or, as in most post-exilic texts, 'common people'.[92] In fact, the meaning of the term depends upon the dating of the oracle. As the bulk of the evidence points to a post-exilic dating, the latter is thus the more likely meaning. This means that this verse does not single out the leaders alone but rather, as in the cases of 2:26-27; 4:9; 8:1-3 and 32:32 (above), emphasize the totality of the opposition to Jeremiah from not only the (civic and religious) leaders but also from the general population.

In the case of Jer 34:19, there is less of a consensus with regard to its dating. Many scholars see Jer 34:8-22 as part of the Deuteronomistic layer of the book of Jeremiah, a view based in part on the similarities in content between this passage and Deut 15:1, 12-15 and Ex 21:2.[93] Others argue that the similarity to the Deuteronomistic tradition is a matter of subject matter, and that the narrative records authentically an event from the time of Jeremiah.[94]

Jer 34:19, part of the longer 34:8-22, deals with the failure of the people and the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem (cf. v. 8) to permanently manumit their Hebrew slaves. As Jer 1:17-19, the people criticized in this passage are the priests, the nobles, and 'all the people of the land' (כל עם הארץ). In contrast, the courtiers/palace officials (הסרסים) are mentioned here, while the kings are not.[95] The topic matter – manumission

88 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 245.

89 E.g. MCKANE, Jeremiah, 22.

90 Cf. CARROLL, Jeremiah, 109.

91 For the translation 'landowner' or 'landed gentry', see, e.g., RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 11; BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 6, and CARROLL, Jeremiah, 109.

92 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 45, MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 23, LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 245-246.

93 E.g. RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 203-204. See also HYATT, Jeremiah, 1056, who argues that this passage, 'which probably rests upon a section of Baruch's memoirs', has been reworked by the Deuteronomistic redactor. See also MCKANE, Jeremiah, 2, 878-882.

94 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 2, 238, following H. WEIPPERT, Die Prosareden des Jeremiabuches, BZAW 132, 1973, 86-106.148-150, who assigns the text to Baruch. See also LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 568.

95 The reading of the LXX is significantly shorter than that of the MT ('the princes of Judah, and the men in power, and the priests, and the people'). It thus mentions

of slaves – suggests that the priests are not targeted in their cultic role at all. Rather, the oracle deals with general rules of legal and social interaction between free men of various professions and status in society and slaves.

Notably, Jer 1:18 and 34:19 contain no reference to the prophets. We may speculate as to the reason of their absence. Jer 34:19 clearly speaks of a civic matter and it is possible that the priests are mentioned as they were part of the civic leadership in a way that the prophets were not. The absence of the prophets in Jer 1:17-19 is more surprising, as we know that many prophets opposed Jeremiah's prophetic ministry. It is possible that the author here was uncomfortable with the explicit idea of prophetic opposition to Jeremiah but this must remain a conjecture.

It is further important to note that, in contrast to the passages discussed previously, Jer 1:18 and 34:19 do not mention any future punishment. These verses, although possibly post-exilic, are thus not part of any conscious attempt to place the blame for the fall of Jerusalem upon the people of Judah and its leadership. This may further explain for the absence of the prophets: the prophets are listed in those contexts where the author wished to emphasize the responsibility of all of Judah, including all its civic and religious leadership. When no such emphasis was sought, the prophets do not appear.

4. Passages dealing with only the priests (Jer 31:14; 33:18, 21)

Lastly, Jer 31:14 and 33:18, 21 list the priests alone. Intriguingly, these two passages present a positive view of the priesthood. Equally noteworthy is the fact that the book of Jeremiah contains no comparable, exilic or post-exilic positive passages relating to the prophets. Both oracles are furthermore often regarded to be of late, post-Jeremianic origin. Hyatt's evaluation of Jer 31:14 is symptomatic and thus worth citing: 'These words hardly come from Jeremiah, who often was in conflict with the priests of his day.'[96] As this article aims to show, however, this statement cannot be defended.[97]

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roughly the same four categories of people but does not subdivide the nobles into those of Judah and those of Jerusalem.

96 HYATT, Jeremiah, 1031.

97 I agree with PATTON, Layers of Meaning, 154, who correctly states that we do injustice to the message of the book of Jeremiah with regard to the cult if we merely brush passages like this aside as a later addition.

4.1. Jeremiah 31:14

In the context of Jer 30:1-31:40 – 'The Book of Comfort' – 31:10-14 enumerates a number of future blessings, among them blessings pertaining to the priesthood. When the ransomed of Jacob will return to Zion, the produce of Zion shall be plentiful, the maidens shall dance and be glad, and God will give the priests their fill of fat things.

The dating of Jer 30-31 is debated and there are arguments in favour of both Jeremianic authorship and a later, exilic or post-exilic dating. There is little doubt that Jeremiah held some sort of hope for the future of his people, and accordingly, the genuineness of some of the sayings in chapters 30-31 is generally conceded (Jer 31:2-6, 15-22).[98] The particular question here, however, concerns verse 14 and the specific envisioned future role of the priests. The diction of the oracle in 31:10-14 is reminiscent of Isaiah 40-55, as is the diction of 30:10-11 and 31:7-9a. On the one hand, this similarity has caused many scholars to date these oracles to the exile[99] or to the Persian Period.[100] On the other hand, given the likelihood that Isa 40-55 depends upon Jeremiah,[101] it is equally possible that the language of Jer 30-31(33) influenced that of Isa 40-55 rather than *vice versa*.[102] Assuming an exilic date of much of Isa 40-55, this would push the date of Jer 30-31(33) back. Furthermore, the stylistic similarities to Isa 40-55 may be a matter of both authors using the same conventional forms of address.[103] Furthermore, LUNDBOM has recently challenged the consensus regarding a post-exilic date of verse 14 by arguing that it contains parallels of vocabulary and phraseology to other (in his view) Jeremianic material.[104]

The priests are referred to in verse 14a (ורויתי נפש הכהנים דשן). God will satisfy ('drench') the priests' desire with 'fat'/'abundance'. The word דשן refers either symbolically to abundance and fertility (e.g. Isa

98 See BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 284-285.

99 E.g. NICHOLSON, Jeremiah, 63.

100 E.g. HYATT, Jeremiah, 1029.

101 See S.M. PAUL, Literary and Ideological Echoes of Jeremiah in Deutero-Isaiah, Proceedings of the Fifth World Congress of Jewish Studies I (ed. P. PELI), 1969, 102-120, B.D. SOMMER, A Prophet Reads Scripture. Allusion in Isaiah 40-66, 1998, 32-72, LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 371-375.

102 See especially R. NURMELA, The Mouth of the Lord has Spoken. Inner-Biblical Allusions in Second and Third Isaiah, 2006, 33.48-49.65-66.

103 See, e.g., RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 179. In the particular case of v. 14, RUDOLPH regards it as a later addition by a priest, as he sees no reason why the priests' future welfare would concern Jeremiah. This claim, however, is unrelated to the diction of the verse.

104 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 427.

55:2), or literally to grease, either oil (Judg 9:9) or fat ashes (i.e. the ashes of sacrificial victims mixed with the fat, cf. Lev 4:12).[105] God will thus either bless the priests with general abundance,[106] or with plenty of sacrificial animals.[107] Although the priests received a portion of the sacrifices for consumption (Lev 7:31-34), however, the fat was offered on the altar as it belonged to God (cf. Lev 3:16-17; 17:6; Num 18:17). Assuming that the blessing would benefit the *priest*, it is therefore better to interpret the promise symbolically.[108] At the same time, there is a link to the cultic realm as well as to food (1 Sam 2:12-17 – the priests coveted the fat). Furthermore, the parallel 14b promises that God's people will 'be satisfied' (ועמי את־טובי ישבעו) with God's good things, using the verb שבע, the basic meaning of which is 'to be sated (with food)'.[109] Jer 31:14 is hence a future promise of plenty of food: the priests will in the future not have to make do with their near-fat-less portion of the sacrifices but will live in such abundance that they will have plenty of fat things to eat.

4.2. Jeremiah 33:18, 21-22

Jer 33:18, 21 share many similarities with 31:14. Neither passage mentions any prophets, while both passages assign a prominent role to the priests in the future Judah. As there shall be a Davidide ruling on the throne of Israel, so there shall be Levitical priests constantly serving God by offering up sacrifices (v. 18). There will be an eternal covenant with the Levitical priests in the same way as with the Davidic kings, and God will multiply their descendents as the host of heaven and as the sand in the sea (vv. 21-22).

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105 BDB, p. 206.

106 See, e.g. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 2, 186, who argues that the connotations here relate to wealth, in the context of (previous) poverty and hunger. See also CARROLL, Jeremiah, 594, who sees in v. 14 prosperity and cultic life together.

107 This view is shared by many pre-critical and early scholars, e.g., RADAK, Rabbinic Bible, Jer 31,13, who understands this verse to indicate the resumption of the temple service.

See also STREANE, Jeremiah, 209; NICHOLSON, Jeremiah, 64; HYATT, Jeremiah, 1031, who all maintain that the priests will have plenty to eat because sacrifices will be abundant in the new age.

108 Cf. MCKANE, Jeremiah, 2, 795; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 432-433. This reading is further supported by the LXX ('I will expand and (cause to) get drunk the soul of the priests, the sons of Levi').

109 BDB, 659.

Jer 33:14-26 lacks a corresponding part in the LXX. Although this does not exclude its authenticity, it speaks strongly against it.[110] Furthermore, its style and language suggest non-Jeremianic authorship,[111] as does the reuse of some of the major themes of the earlier material in the book of Jeremiah, especially those found in Jer 30-31.[112] Lastly, the ideas expressed in these verses are found elsewhere only in texts from the Persian and the Hellenistic period. Notably, in the Hebrew Bible the double vision of the priesthood and the Davidic heir is only attested here (and possibly also in Sach 12:12-13),[113] while it is expounded upon in the literature of the inter-testamental period (e.g. Ben Sirah 45:15, 23-26; The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs) and in the Qumranic literature.[114] Furthermore, the idea of a covenant with the Levitical priests is found elsewhere only in Mal 1:6-2:9 and 3:1-5. The author of Jer 33:18 is not thinking simply of the continuity of the pre-exilic priesthood but of a covenant of perpetuity between the tribe of Levi and God.[115]

Again, however, LUNDBOM argues that this passage, as well as Jer 31:14 (above), suggests that thoughts on the priesthood were integral to Jeremiah. Furthermore, he points out that once Jerusalem is destroyed, nothing would hinder Jeremiah from saying something positive about the future of the priesthood.[116] Likewise, the arguments about repetition of material that occurs earlier in the book must be discounted, as vocabulary, phraseology and whole passages are repeated throughout the book, and repetitions are no more indicative of a late date here than elsewhere. There is also nothing in terms of style that sets this passage apart. As to the evidence of the LXX, LUNDBOM argues that verses 14-26 were lost in the LXX by vertical haplography.[117]

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110 E.g. BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 298; K. LUST, The Diverse Text Forms of Jeremiah and History Writing with Jer 33 as a Test Case, JNSL 20, 1994, 31-48; B. VAWTER, Levitical Messianism and the New Testament, in: J.L. MCKENZIE (ed.), The Bible in Current Catholic Thought, 1962, 83-84.

111 HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 2, 228.

112 E.g. J. FERRY, 'Je restaurerai Juda et Israël' (Jr 33,7.9.26). L'écriture de Jérémie 33, Transeuphratène 15, 1998, 69-82, who argues for a Persian dating of much of Jer 33.

113 For a discussion of the dating of this material, see L.-S. TIEMEYER, Will the Prophetic Texts from the Hellenistic Period Stand Up, Please, in: L.L. GRABBE and O. LIPSCHITS (eds.), Judah between East and West: The Transition from Persian to Greek Rule (400-200 BCE), forthcoming.

114 See further VAWTER, Levitical Messianism, 83-99. See also H. DIXON SLINGERLAND, The Levitical Hallmark within the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, JBL 103, 1984, 531-537.

115 VAWTER, Levitical Messianism, 84.

116 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 538.

117 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 2, 538-539. He discusses further two more examples of vertical haplography (1 Sam 10:27; Ezek 36:23b-38), with supporting bibliography.

The expressions denoting the cultic personnel vary. Verse 18 uses ולכהנים הלוים = 'and to/for the priests, the Levites', while verse 21 uses את־הלוים הכהנים = 'and with the Levites, the priests'. Finally, verse 22 speaks only of הלוים = 'the Levites'. The idea of Levitical Priests has been much discussed.[118] In the present context, however, it is sufficient to note the positive attitude towards the sacrificial cult and its personnel, an attitude that stands in some contrast to other statements within the book of Jeremiah that the sacrifices of the people of Judah are not pleasing to God (e.g. Jer 6:20; 7:21-22; 14:12) (see further below).

4.3. Conclusion

Jer 31:14 and 33:18, 21-22 promise that the priests, together with the Davidic heir, will be blessed in the future. In contrast, there is no similar promise for the prophets. This gives rise to a number of questions.

Does this positive portrayal imply a later date by necessity? In my view, it does not. First, as we have seen, most of the passages that convey a critical disposition of the priests are deemed by scholars to be post-exilic. This means that we have to postulate a situation where one layer of post-exilic additions is critical and where another, later, layer is favourable towards the priesthood.[119] Secondly, many of the post-exilic texts, both prophetic (e.g. Isa 57:6-8; 66:1-6; Hag 2:10-14; Sach 3; Malachi) and non-prophetic (Neh 6; 13) attest to a critical disposition

118 For a discussion of the distinction or lack thereof between Levites and priests in the book of Deuteronomy, see especially the discussions of G.E. WRIGHT, The Levites in Deuteronomy, VT 4, 1956, 325-330; J.A. EMERTON, Priests and Levites in Deuteronomy. An Examination of Dr. G.E. Wright's Theory, VT 12, 1962, 129-138, and R. ABBA, Priests and Levites in Deuteronomy, VT 27, 1977, 257-267. For more far-ranging discussions, see especially B. GLAZIER-MCDONALD, Divine Messenger, SBLDS 98, 1987, 73-80; J. O'BRIEN, Priest and Levite, SBLDS 121, 1990, 27-48, and J. SCHAPER, Priester und Leviten im achämenidischen Juda: Studien zur Kult- und Sozialgeschichte Israels in persischer Zeit, FAT 31, 2000, 79-129.167. See finally also my discussion in *Priestly Rites*, 127-129.

119 A similar view is, in fact, held by many scholars with regard to Isa 56-66. See, for example, T.K. CHEYNE, Introduction to the Book of Isaiah, 1895, 323-328; C.C. TORREY, The Second Isaiah, 1928, 436-437.439; K. PAURITSCH, Die Neue Gemeinde. Gott sammelt Ausgestoßene und Arme (Jesaja 56-66), AnBib 47, 1971, 71.79; P.D. HANSON, The Dawn of Apocalyptic, 1975, 101; R.N. WHYBRAY, Isaiah 40-66, NCBC, 1975, 211-212, and K. KOENEN, Ethik und Eschatologie im Tritojesajabuch. Eine Literarkritische und Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie, WMANT 62, 1990, 88-103, who all regard Isa 58:13-14 to be later than the surrounding material.

towards the priesthood. Finally, the one post-exilic scribe that we know – Ezra – is not presented as overly fond of the priests.[120]

A more satisfactory solution is to place all the oracular material about the priesthood side by side and to argue that the *focus* of the various texts is different, both in terms of time and in terms of function. First, as we have seen, the priests are criticized, by the prophet and/or by later redactors, for their failure as *leaders* and *teachers* of the people. In contrast, they are never faulted for the cultic performances. In fact, as we shall see shortly, the passages that speak about sacrifices do *not* mention the priests (Jer 6:20; 7:21-22; 14:12). Secondly, the pre-exilic priests are being criticized as part of the strategy to blame them for their role in the fall of Jerusalem. At the same time, the book of Jeremiah is free to envision a new beginning beyond the exile where things will be different. As neither Jeremiah nor the post-exilic editors could, at that point, envision a future without the temple, they accordingly emphasized the continuity and renewal of the temple worship and of God's priestly ministers. Jer 31:14 and 33:18, 21-22 thus speak about the *cultic* and *future* role of the priests.

The oracular material in the book of Jeremiah and the priests – Conclusion

After surveying the references to the priest in the oracular material in the book of Jeremiah, we find that the attitude displayed towards the priests is consistent throughout the various parts. Beginning with the passages which reveal a negative view of the priests, we find that the priests are never criticized alone. Rather, they always appear alongside the prophets and other groups of leaders, and/or alongside the general population of Judah. Those passages that present the priests together with the prophets imply that these leaders, together with other leaders and together with the people of Judah, bear the responsibility for the fall of Jerusalem. The prophets tend to bear the brunt of the condemnation, with the priests referred to as 'the other' religious leaders, culpable but to a lesser extent. It is also noteworthy that the critique of the priests focuses on their failure as leaders and teachers and not on their cultic duties. Turning to the two passages which disclose a positive view of the priests, we discover that both speak of the future priesthood after the fall of Jerusalem. Furthermore, these two passages focus precisely on the area that is not critiqued in the other passages, namely the cult. There is thus no contradiction between the negative and the

120 See TIEMEYER, Priestly Rites, esp. 180-190.

positive view, neither from a synchronic nor from a diachronic perspective. The book of Jeremiah criticizes the pre-exilic priests as failing to lead the people, a failure that helped bring about the fall of Jerusalem, but it is positive towards the priesthood as an institution and towards the idea that they are ordained to perform the cult. It further envisions the priests as remaining significant in post-exilic Judah.

5. Negative attitudes towards the temple and the cult in the oracles

What does the book of Jeremiah say about the cult of the Jerusalem temple? We shall discover that the oracular material in the book of Jeremiah presents a motley picture. Several texts emphasize the central place of the temple in Judah's worship (Jer 7:11-15 and 11:15), although they stress that the cult alone cannot avert the coming disaster (7:4; 11:15; 14:11). Others emphasize God's lack of desire for burnt offerings (6:20; 7:21-22). As we shall discover, however, the temple cult in itself is rarely being criticized. Rather, what is being condemned is the people's reliance upon it for salvation. According to the inner chronology of the book, these passages were uttered prior to 586 BC, although it is clear that some are later additions written retrospectively. These oracles thus aim to discredit the belief that the cult could (have) avert(ed) the catastrophe.

5.1. Jer 7:1-15 – Jeremiah's temple sermon

Jer 7:4; 11:15; 14:11 all emphasize that the cult alone cannot avert God's coming punishment. The origin of Jer 7:1-15 is disputed.[121] While some scholars regard it as a Jeremianic utterance from 609 BC (assuming a connection with the events narrated in Jer 26),[122] others see it as the product of the Deuteronomistic editor from around 550 BC.[123]

The temple sermon is inherently positive towards the temple and its cult *per se*. The problem lies in the behaviour of the *current* worshippers. These worshippers combine immoral and unethical behaviour and idolatrous acts with worship of YHWH (vv. 5-6, 8-11). God would

121 For a detailed overview of the different views, see McKane, Jeremiah, 164-169.

122 Bright, Jeremiah, 58; Holladay, Jeremiah, 1, 239-40; Weippert, Prosareden, 27-48, esp. 41.48; Lundbom, Jeremiah, 1, 455.

123 Hyatt, Jeremiah, 867-868; Carroll, Jeremiah, 207-211.

be happy to dwell in the temple (vv. 3, 7)[124] and to claim possession of it (v. 11), but only if the people changed their behaviour (v. 3) and began to live righteously (vv. 5-6) and only if they learnt to put their trust in God rather than in the temple itself (v. 4). At the moment, the people are foolish enough to relate to the temple, through using a threefold repetition of the formula היכל ה', as a means to avoid disaster (vv. 4, 10; cf. 11:15 below).[125] To cite CARROLL, 'the holy place does not save people, but how they live outside the temple gives the holy place its real quality.'[126] This attitude is also found in later prophetic writings. Isa 66:1-6, for example, forms a parallel in that both passages emphasize the futility of combining unrighteous living with immoral acts and unorthodox worship, and in that none of the passages rejects the temple as an institution (Isa 66:1-2, 6).[127]

5.2. Jer 11:15

Jer 11:15, part of the short Jeremianic poem of Jer 11:15-16,[128] displays an attitude similar to that of Jer 4:1-15, in that God claims the temple to be 'his house' but deplores the acts of the current worshippers (15a).

According to the MT of 15a, God is reported asking what right '[his] beloved', i.e. Judah, has in ' [his] house' (מה לידידי בביתי), as she עשותה המזמתה הרבים, and as ובשר־קדש יעברו מעליך (lit. 'and holy meat they will pass from before you'). The reason is then given in 15b: כי רעתכי אז תעלזי = (lit. 'because you will then exalt your evil [ways]').[129]

The phrase עשותה המזמתה הרבים in 15aα is literally rendered as 'and she has done much wickedness'.[130] Given the odd syntax, however, the

124 The text refers to the temple in vv. 2 and 4. It is therefore likely that the reference to 'in this place' (במקום הזה) in the intermediate v. 3 refers to the temple as well, *contra* MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 159-160.

125 For a possible liturgical function of this formula, where the prophets and priests would stand at the gates of the temple and require a so-called 'entrance torah', see H.G. REVENTLOW, Gattung und Überlieferung in der 'Tempelrede Jeremias' Jer 7 und 26, ZAW 81, 1969, 328-329.331-335, and H.-J. KRAUS, Worship in Israel (tr. G. Buswell), 1966, 211-213.

126 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 209-210.

127 See TIEMEYER, Priestly Rites, 48-53, 160-177.271.

128 Most scholars see the passage as Jeremianic, e.g. HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 349-352; HYATT, Jeremiah, 910; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 633.

129 See LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 627-630, who adheres to the MT.

130 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 627 (translation) and 630 (commentary), attempts to make sense of the MT, maintaining הרבים to mean 'many'. He translates 'the many – also sacrificial flesh – will cease from you because of your evil', and he argues that 'the many' are best identified with the temple personnel, i.e. the priests. Thus, as a result

word הרבים is likely to be an erroneous writing of חבריים = 'fattened animals', a term that would fit well with the following 15aβ ובשר־קדש 'holy meat'. Verse 15a thus claims that God's 'beloved' has sacrificed.[131] The following phrase יעברו מעליך can then be understood as derived from the *Hiphil* העביר ('to save') and, deleting the כי, combined with the word רעתכי, 15b asks 'can they [i.e. the sacrifices] save from your wickedness?' This means that Jer 11:15 expresses the same sentiment as Jer 7:1-15.[132] The same idea is attested also in the reading in the LXX, a reading followed by most interpreters owing to the difficulties of the MT. The LXX of 15aβ reads 'will prayers and consecrated meat take away from you your evil', and 11b reads 'or will you escape through these things?'.[133]

In the present context of Jer 11:1-17, 'Judah's evil way' in verse 15 is juxtaposed with Judah's idolatry (vv. 9-13). By implication, the final version of the book of Jeremiah claims that Judah's idolatry makes her unworthy of God's temple. Moreover, her idolatry, within or outside the temple, makes the temple ritual ineffective.[134] Jer 11:15 does accordingly not condemn the temple cult. On the contrary, the ideal would be an effective cult, to which the reality falls short owing to the idolatry of the people of Judah.

5.3. Jer 14:11

As Jer 7:4 and 11:15 attest to the idea that the temple service will not save the people, so does Jer 14:10-12, a verse possibly written by the Deuteronomistic redactor.[135] According to this verse, God will not listen when the people fast, and he will not accept them when they sacrifice. Instead, he will consume them by sword, famine and pestilence. This,

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of Judah's evil, the priests and others in the temple, including the sacrificial meat, will cease to exist.

131 See, e.g., J.P. HYATT, The Original Text of Jeremiah 11:15-16, JBL 60, 1941, 57-60, who reads הבריים ובשר קדש יעברו מעליכי רעתכי = 'Can fatlings and holy flesh avert from thee thy doom? ' For a recent review of the most suggested translation, see MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 247-250.

132 For a different reading, see RADAK, Rabbinic Bible, Jer 11:15, who takes יעברו to mean 'neglect' and translates 'you are neglecting to offer'. Jer 11:15 would then lament the *neglect* of the cult (כאילו אינם מוטלים עליך לעשותם)

133 A Hebrew *Vorlage* הנדרים has been proposed in the light of the Greek μὴ εὐχαὶ, see HYATT, The Original Text, 58.

134 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 273-274.

135 E.g. HYATT, Jeremiah, 933, who is also open to the possibility that Jeremiah wrote it later in life when he had come to believe that intercession was useless.

again, does not imply that God rejects sacrifices or fasting. Rather, Jer 14:11 expresses the belief that neither sacrifices nor fasting can, in the current situation, change God's decision to punish Judah, and cause him to withdraw the planned destruction.

5.4. Jer 6:20

Jer 6:20 and 7:21-22 (below) speak about God's lack of desire for burnt offerings. Jer 6:20, part of the longer 6:16-21,[136] states that God does not want the people's burnt offerings despite the use of imported and thus expensive frankincense and sweet-smelling cane. The preceding verses 16-19 provide the background:[137] as the people have *deliberately* disobeyed God by not following God's way (v. 16) and by not heading his appointed watchmen (v. 17), God will bring evil upon the people (v. 17). Jer 6:20 does therefore not reject sacrifices *per se*, but only those of *that generation* owing to their disobedience. God's mind is made up and sacrifices, however exquisite, cannot alter his decision.

Jer 6:16-21 contains several features that resemble the book of Deuteronomy, thus causing several scholars to regard it as the work of the Deuteronomist redactor.[138] The rejection of sacrifices here would then not apply so much to the pre-exilic cult, but rather serve as a polemic of certain post-exilic groups in Judah against the temple authorities (cf. Isa 65:3).[139] As the Josianic reform could have easily triggered the sentiments expressed in the passage, however, Jeremianic authorship cannot be ruled out.[140] In my view, there is nothing inherently post-exilic about critique of the temple cult although it undoubtedly increased during this period. Instead, there are examples of prophetic critique of the priesthood scattered throughout pre-exilic prophetic texts (1 Sam 2:12-17; Hos 4:6, 8; 8:11-13; Mic 3:11). From the opposite perspective, there are texts, commonly regarded as post-exilic (Jer 31:14 and 33:18, 21-22), that attest to a favourable view of the priests. It is therefore questionable whether the attitude towards the priests as displayed in a given text is indicative of its date. From the perspective of the book of Jeremiah, the fact that this text appears in the part of the

136 There is agreement as to the limits of the passage. See, e.g., NICHOLSON, Jeremiah, 1, 70; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 199-200; MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 148; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 433.

137 Cf. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 440.

138 E.g. CARROLL, Jeremiah, 200-201.

139 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 201.

140 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 440.

book that speaks of the time before 586 BC suggests that it aimed to demonstrate the people's responsibility for the destruction of Jerusalem and the insufficiency of the *pre-exilic* cult to *alone* avert the catastrophe.

5.5. Jer 7:21-23

Jer 7:21-23, part of the longer section of 7:21-26/28/9.[141] The connection between this passage and the preceding temple sermon in 7:1-15 (above) is unclear. Although the various passages verses 1-15, 16-20 and 21-28 may be originally separate prose sayings, they now form a redactional unity of uncertain date that focuses on cultic abuses.[142] CARROLL, for example, views the rejection of the temple cult as typical of the post-exilic period partisan politics (cf. Isa 66:1-4).[143]

Verse 21 (עלותיכם ספו על־זבחיכם ואכלו בשר) reads literally as a command to the people of Judah: 'add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat meat!' [144] God did not demand such fine distinctions when he commanded them in the past (v. 22). That is, the Judahites should not waste their time with the finer details of the cult.[145] As it will not make a difference, they can equally well eat the meat of the עולה that normally should be completely consumed by the fire. They should instead focus their energy on what is essential, i.e. to obey God (v. 23). These sentiments, however, do not constitute a whole-sale rejection of the sacrificial cult. Rather, the central message of Jer 7:21-23 concerns having one's *priorities* right: obedience to God first and sacrifices second.

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141 See discussion in: CARROLL, Jeremiah, 214, with regard to the division of the text.

142 BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 58.

143 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 215-217.

144 This statement has traditionally been understood in two ways. According to R. HENTSCHKE, Die Stellung der vorexilischen Schriftpropheten zum Kultus, BZAW 75, 1957, 114-118. According to HENTSCHKE, as the cult was likely to have arisen in the context of Canaanite temple worship, Jeremiah was merely bringing the people of Judah back to 'den alten Kern der echten, mosaischen Jahwereligion'. Alternatively, H. KRUSE, Die 'dialektische Negation' als semitisches Idiom, VT 4, 1954, 393-394, argues that this statement serves only to emphasize that obedience is more important. While the first view is unaccepted today, the latter remains a possible interpretation.

145 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 174; BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 56.

5.6. Jer 12:7

Lastly, Jer 12:7 states that God has left 'his house' (ביתי). In the larger context of Jer 12:7-11, God laments that he has handed over his beloved [people] to her enemies as she had turned against him, and that, as a result, the land [of Judah] has become a desolate wilderness. Nebuchadnezzar's invasion during the reign of Jehoiakim as punishment for his rebellion (2 Kgs 24:2) in 602 BC may have given birth to this lament,[146] although the events of 597 BC[147] or of 586 BC[148] cannot be ruled out.[149] The word ביתי may refer to either 'the temple' [150] or 'the house of Judah'.[151] As there is very little in the passage as a whole that speaks of the temple and its cult, the latter meaning is more likely. As such, Jer 12:7 does not contribute to our investigation.

5.7. Conclusion

There is no sense throughout these passages that the temple and its cult *in and by themselves* are viewed negatively. On the contrary, while the temple and the sacrifices (בשר־קדש – '*holy* meat') remain holy, it is the people of Israel who have forfeited their right to the temple, owing to their shameful actions (Jer 7:11-15; 11:15). These passages further emphasize that the temple and its cult alone cannot save the people. Accordingly, although the cult plays a significant role, fidelity to God in terms of obedience and worship is more important. The attitude of relating to the temple and its cult as a crutch is therefore unacceptable.

146 HYATT, Jeremiah, 918-919.

147 E.g. LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 660.

148 E.g. CARROLL, Jeremiah, 290.

149 MCKANE, Jeremiah, 2, 278, argues that the lack of detail suggests that the depiction of the devastation is premonition rather than a description of what has taken place. The perfect tense is thus best understood as what is called prophetic perfect, conveying the intensity of what is to come. There is thus no need to date the verse after 586 BC.

150 CARROLL, Jeremiah, 290; LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 653-654 (e.g. Ezek 8-11). See also the Targum which translates 'I have forsaken the house of my sanctuary'.

151 E.g. HYATT, Jeremiah, 919; MCKANE, Jeremiah, 1, 269. See, e.g 1 Sam 10:1; 1 Kgs 8:53; Ezek 8:12 and 9:9.

6. Positive evaluation of the cult – Jer 17:19-27

Finally, the book of Jeremiah contains one passage that is outright positive towards the cult. Jer 17:19-27 emphasizes the outmost importance to keep the Sabbath. This admonition is linked with the cult in that the acceptability of sacrifice is grounded in keeping the Sabbath: pending on the people's obedience to God, people from six regions of Israel will bring up burnt offering and sacrifices, cereal offerings and frankincense to the temple (v. 26).

This passage is all but unanimously considered to be secondary to Jeremiah for three reasons. First, its specific content – the Sabbath –is deemed to be a post-exilic concern.[152] Secondly, it reflects a world at peace with stabilized movements of commerce, and not a world threatened by the Neo-Babylonian army. As such, this presentation is reminiscent of Neh 13:15-18.[153] Thirdly, a fifth century dating would fit the evidence of Isa 56:2, 4, 6, and the focus on sacrifices would fit the concerns of the Jerusalem community of the rebuilt temple. LUNDBOM is the one exception. He points out that very few *stylistic* factors set this passage apart from others attributed to Jeremiah. Instead, the bulk of the argument is our predisposition to see the importance of the Sabbath as primarily a post-exilic concern. LUNDBOM argues that, for example, Jeremiah's temple sermon (Jer 7:9-10, see above), is positive towards the Sabbath, and that other prophetic books maintain the importance of the Sabbath whilst criticizing the cult (e.g. Am 8:4-6). LUNDBOM accordingly dates Jer 17:19-27 to the relatively peaceful reign of Josiah.[154] LUNDBOM is right in criticizing the scholarly tendency of viewing the Sabbath as a predominantly post-exilic interest. Even so, it is important to remember that this passage is an idealistic portrayal of the *future*. It looks forward to a peaceful time when not only Judah but also parts of the former northern kingdom will worship God in the Jerusalem temple together. Furthermore, as it speaks of 'kings' sitting on the throne of David (v. 25), it clearly does not refer to a specific time but rather envisions a longer time span. In my view, this passage is comparable with Isa 56:1-8 and therefore betrays post-exilic authorship.

Jer 17:19-27 stands in many ways in opposition to Jer 6:20; 7:22; 11:15 and 14:12 (above). The book of Jeremiah thus differentiates between its warnings against the pre-exilic Judahites' false reliance on the cult on the one hand, and the function of the cult in the envisioned

152 See, e.g., HYATT, Jeremiah, 958-960; RUDOLPH, Jeremia, 109; BRIGHT, Jeremiah, 120; NICHOLSON, Jeremiah, 1, 153; CARROLL, Jeremiah, 367.

153 See, e.g., CARROLL, Jeremiah, 367-368; HOLLADAY, Jeremiah, 1, 509-511.

154 LUNDBOM, Jeremiah, 1, 803-804.807-809.

future on the other. Again, this division is chronological: what was wrong in pre-exilic Judah, owing to the people's disobedience to God, will be acceptable, even exemplary, behaviour in the future, as the people will by then be obedient to God. The book of Jeremiah thus maintains that God's favourable attitude towards the cult remains constant but that the people's behaviour changes.

The oracular material in the book of Jeremiah and the temple cult – Conclusion

In conclusion, the oracular material in the book of Jeremiah is overall positive towards the cult of the temple. While it cannot and should not serve as a sense of security, it pleases God when the temple is rightly honoured. Furthermore, the texts that are either considered to be of post-exilic origin or that envision a future beyond the plight of the years leading up to 586 BC related to the cult in positive terms. This picture fits well that of the attitude towards the priests in the same material. The material that relates to the situation in Judah before 586 BC is critical towards the priests in their role as leaders of Judah. They are, however, very seldom critical of the priests as officers of the cult. Likewise, the post-exilic texts/ the texts that envision the future clearly favour the priesthood. This places the book of Jeremiah alongside especially the book of Ezekiel, in their shared appreciation of the priests and the temple cult. At the same time, it places it apart from Isaiah 56-66, Haggai, Zechariah 1-8 and Malachi that, in their critique of the contemporary leadership, often single out the priesthood as particularly blameworthy, and that often critique the priests in their performance of especially their cultic roles.

Jeremiah as a Prophetic Book

STUART WEEKS

On the face of it, there may seem nothing very problematic about calling Jeremiah a 'prophetic book'. It is obvious, of course, that the term undoubtedly means slightly different things to different scholars, and that its usefulness as a shorthand depends largely on our willingness to retain it as a rather loose and traditional designation of subject-matter: the more precise we make such labels, the more careful we have to be about attaching them. What is less obvious, but potentially far more serious an issue, is that problems can arise not only from the definition, but from the very use of designations like this: the difficulties, in other words, may lie as much in the act of labelling as in the labels. I want to focus primarily here, then, not so much on what we understand 'prophetic book' to mean, but on what we understand such a description to imply for the ways in which we might read Jeremiah, and relate it to other texts.

If the distinction is unclear, it might help to begin by observing that while the classification of texts by genre is a fairly complicated business, it is largely something that we do with an eye to our own concerns and purposes. If we can make general pronouncements about 'the novel', say, we can also sort the same works which comprise that genre into different groups or genres – perhaps to contrast detective fiction with science fiction, or to compare the nineteenth-century products with their forebears. Different purposes lead to different classifications, so that a work may be labelled in many different ways, and grouped with or distinguished from other works as the occasion demands. Much of what we call 'literary genre', then, arises not so much from something inherent in texts, or in the purposes of their authors, but from the measuring of texts, in their various different aspects, against selected, extrinsic criteria.

That is not to say, of course, that texts do not themselves display concerns with genre: some explicitly apply labels to themselves, or adopt instantly recognizable forms and conventions. Most, in one way or another, offer some guidance as to how they are intended to be read. Such guidance, however, depends upon a sort of inter-action between text and reader, and anticipates that the reader will recognize the clues

and make the appropriate associations – a task which is seldom easy for modern readers dealing with ancient texts. Furthermore, just as many different labels may be applied to a single text as we classify it in different ways, so also a text may align itself with various different conventions: for an obvious example, we need look no further than the book of Lamentations, which contrives to incorporate both traditional motifs from laments, and the rigid requirements of acrostic poetry. Finally, on the subject of such generic markers, we should note also that writers compose on the basis of texts that they know, rather than from some fixed and abstract style-sheet. Consequently, as each composition successively imitates, adapts, and innovates, so conventions and genres evolve and develop, sometimes in different ways simultaneously. Even when we are dealing with modern literature, it is treacherously easy to project conventions backwards or across on to texts which had no knowledge of them, and to discern an authorial purpose when there was none.

When we say that something is a 'prophetic book', then, we may be adopting a category which can trace its pedigree back at least to the compilation of the Twelve, but we should not presume that this category necessarily offers special insights into the purposes or contexts of the works which it includes. It is far from certain, indeed, that any or all the authors of those works would themselves have recognized the category, and it is very difficult to identify any structural, stylistic or thematic elements which both unite all those works and distinguish them from others.[1] Whilst it is undeniably true, then, that some of these books are aware of, or even dependant on others, it also seems highly improbable that they are drawing on some central blueprint, or have a fixed notion of what a prophetic book ought to be like. It may be important, in this respect, to observe that, although we have records of prophecy from elsewhere, both documentary and literary,[2] there is no

1 Indeed, in his recent attempts to define the genre formally, EHUD BEN ZVI can offer no description more precise than that prophetic books have introductions and conclusions, both highly variable, and include 'prophetic readings', by which he means a wide range of materials, united only by their appearance in prophetic books. See especially his: The Prophetic Book: a Key Form of Prophetic Literature, in: M.A. SWEENEY and E. BEN ZVI (eds.), The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century, 2003, 276-297.

2 Of course, it is difficult in some cases to say which is which, or if the distinction is necessarily helpful in every case. Where oracles may have been delivered orally by prophets, the records preserved of them may, equally, have been revised in the direction of greater literary refinement; cf. M. NISSINEN, Spoken, Written, Quoted, and Invented: Orality and Writtenness in Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy, in: E. BEN ZVI and M.H. FLOYD (eds.), Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern

evidence of any comparable genre of prophetic literature elsewhere in the ancient Near East, which might have influenced or governed development of the Hebrew texts. Arguably, moreover, the degree of diversity amongst the biblical works grows only greater over time, making it unlikely that existing works gave rise to any common perception of generic norms, and feeding the suspicion that, as so often in literature, the texts which we possess are, at most, not members of a set, but of a family tree. If so, then it may be meaningless, or even profoundly misleading, to try to seek the elements common to all or most as a basis for identifying the distinctive characteristics of each.[3]

These considerations may be especially important for the study of Jeremiah, with its very diverse and distinctive contents. To be sure, the complicated redactional issues make it difficult to generalize about almost any aspect of the composition, but it is clear that the influences on this work extend far beyond whatever prophetic literature already existed, and it seems unhelpful to assume that they are all somehow filtered through a tradition of specifically 'prophetic' literary conventions. Customary though it may have become to talk about the narrative sections as 'prophetic narrative', for example, it is not clear that they really constitute a single type of composition even within the book itself, let alone that they are all most naturally grouped with narratives about prophets elsewhere, so we must avoid assuming *a priori* that specific conventions governed the composition and use of all stories involving prophets. We do not, as a rule, distinguish, say, narratives about priests as 'priestly narratives' or poems mentioning birds as 'avian verse', because we recognize that those categories have no implications beyond their self-evident description of subject-matter. Unless we have good reason to believe that the matter is different for prophets (and that is a case that needs argument, not presupposition), it is diffi-

Prophecy SBL Symposium Series 10, 2000, 235-271, esp. 241, 244; also, K. VAN DER TOORN, From the Oral to the Written: The Case of Old Babylonian Prophecy, in the same volume, 219-34. Rather differently, some texts like the Egyptian *Wen-Amun*, once regarded as documentary, are now classed more often as literature.

3 As E.D. HIRSCH notes, 'To find the essence of a text by such procedures of abstraction is like finding the essence of a random set of objects (flag poles, billiard cues, pencils) in their being oblong.' See his Validity in Interpretation, 1967, 110 n. 28. ALASTAIR FOWLER, Kinds of Literature: an Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes, 1982, 41, describes the individual members of a genre as 'a family whose septs and individual members are related in various ways, without necessarily having any single feature shared in common by all.'

cult to see why scholarship should feel obliged to speak of 'prophetic narratives', or, for that matter, of 'prophetic memoirs' and the like.[4]

Over-emphasizing the significance of generic tags can not only create artificial groups and boundaries in this way, but it can also allow us to presume too readily that genuinely important links with other prophetic books are merely expressions of convention, within prophetic literature or prophecy itself, rather than indications of more direct influences. The explicit citation of Mic 3:12 in 26:18, and the extensive overlap with the Deuteronomistic History at the end of the book, are merely amongst the clearest indications that Jeremiah has close links with other literature, and there are, of course, good reasons also to connect it with both Deuteronomy and Hosea. Whether such links are original or redactional, they must make us very wary of presuming that other points of contact with other works should be explained simply by reference to the conventions of prophetic literature or of prophecy itself. The 'What do you see?' accounts in Jer 1:11, 13 and 24:3, for instance, resemble similar materials in Amos 7:8; 8:2 and Zech 4:2; 5:2: in the absence of any very compelling reason to suppose that the books are independently citing a form which was conventionally used by actual prophets, or which had somehow become normative in prophetic literature, there is no reason to exclude the strong possibility that direct literary influences were at work here too.

If we risk obscuring the possible connections between prophetic books by presuming that they all drew on some common, hidden pool of conventions, we also risk losing sight of links to other literature. It is widely recognized now that the character, and perhaps also the deployment of the so-called 'confessions' can only properly be understood with reference to poetic traditions outside the prophetic corpus.[5] Whatever weight we give to theories of Deuteronomistic redaction, moreover, it would also clearly be unhelpful to read the historiographical

4 So, for instance, DAVID PETERSEN, who would define prophetic literature simply in terms of the different styles of prophetic intermediation which it attests, freely isolates such 'basic forms of prophetic literature' as prophetic speeches or prophetic historiography, which are not self-evidently different from other speeches or historiography, except in terms of their content. Cf. D.L. PETERSEN, Defining Prophecy and Prophetic Literature, in: M. NISSINEN (ed.), Prophecy in its Ancient Near Eastern Context. Mesopotamian, Biblical, and Arabian Perspectives, SBL Symposium Series 13, 2000, 33-44, esp. 41-2. For a recent defence of the 'prophetic memoir', see R.E. CLEMENTS, The Prophet as an Author: The Case of the Isaiah Memoir, in: BEN ZVI and FLOYD, Writings and Speech, 89-101.

5 It seems unfortunate that much of this discussion, sparked principally by REVENTLOW'S Liturgie und prophetisches Ich bei Jeremia, 1963, has been set in form-critical terms, presuming direct cultic rather than literary influence.

sections without reference to the methods and motives of other Hebrew historiography – a contextualization urged on us by the current ending to the book. Even amongst the oracular sections of Jeremiah, however, we should be alert not only to the links with other poetry at the level of style and technique, but also to the range of non-prophetic ancient texts which develop conventional images of social collapse and disorder.[6] Although it is self-evidently useful to read Jeremiah in connection with other prophetic books, it remains important, nonetheless, to place it also within the broader literary and cultural context of its author and original readers. More generally, whilst it may be convenient to label books as 'prophetic', we must be wary of presuming that such labels, or the very notion of 'genre', for that matter, can be used to group and define texts for any purpose other than our convenience.

That is a point which should be borne in mind when dealing with any texts, but there is another, more specific problem involved in the ways we describe prophetic literature, which lies in the fact that most of it is not, strictly speaking, 'prophetic'. Even if Jeremiah consisted entirely of original oracles spoken by an original prophet, and preserved for us intact, it would not be *prophecy*. That phenomenon, as reflected both in the biblical accounts and in other ancient sources, involves the mediation of a message to its addressee within the context of a specific circumstance. To publish, or even to preserve that message outside its original context is something different from prophesying, and is probably closer, in terms of motivation, at least, to historiography.[7] When a prophetic book, furthermore, was copied and read many years after the events with which it is concerned, the prime concern of the copyists

6 Most notably the 'prophecies' of Marduk and Šulgi in Mesopotamia; cf. A.K. GRAYSON and W.G. LAMBERT, Akkadian Prophecies, JCS 18, 1964, 7-30, and their 'Text A'. This is also a feature of the so-called 'lament' genre in Egypt, which includes the words attributed to Neferti, Ipuwer, and Khakheperreseneb. On the conventionalism of that genre, see, e.g., S. LURIA, Die Ersten werden die Letzten sein, Klio 22, 1929, 405-431. Closer to home, it seems likely that a similarly stylized account is to be found in the 'Balaam' text from Deir 'Allā; cf. J. HOFTIJZER and G. VAN DER KOOIJ, Aramaic Texts from Deir 'Alla, DMOA 19, 1976, 173-82, pls. 1-15, 23, 29-33.

7 It is not my purpose here to discuss the extent to which the prophetic literature may preserve specimens of actual prophecy, although I would note that the motives and mechanisms commonly suggested for such preservation are largely speculative, and more usually rely on an assumption that the preservation must have occurred somehow than on any inherent plausibility. On the relationship between prophetic books and prophetic activity more generally, see especially M. NISSINEN, How Prophecy became Literature, SJOT 19, 2005, 153-72, although I think that his deliberate stretching of the term 'prophecy' to embrace both phenomena tends to obscure the distinction which he makes between them.

was surely more than a desire to prove that God had warned his people, and their interest surely more than antiquarian. Even at the point of composition, it seems likely that Jeremiah was intended not just to preserve words from the past (if it does that at all), but to offer, amongst other things, an interpretation of that past. This may well have been revised and tweaked by generations of subsequent editors, but we do not need to hold radical positions about the history, character or authenticity of the prophetic books to appreciate that they must be understood not as tape-recordings but as literature, and not as prophetic acts but as textual artefacts.[8]

Correspondingly, we should not treat the prophetic books like documentary archives. If there are points of interest which arise from comparison with the very different records of prophecy from Mesopotamia, those should not deter us from investigating prophetic literature in terms of the styles and conventions which play a role in ancient literature more generally. We might contrast, for instance, the assignment of the prophetic content to named individuals with the more common anonymity of ancient literature, but note that those other types of composition which conventionally bear names, most notably instructions, the laments from Egypt, and apocalyptic accounts, usually do so for reasons that have little to do with straightforward authorial attribution.[9] On a related issue, we might note the strong tendency to

8 To this extent, I am in agreement with PHILIP DAVIES' emphasis on the literary character of the books, in his '"Pen of Iron, Point of Diamond" (Jer 17:1): Prophecy as Writing', in: BEN ZVI and FLOYD, Writings and Speech, 65-81. I doubt, however, that most of the prophetic books can readily be understood in terms of expansions upon oracles preserved in documentary archives, or viewed so simply as collections, and DAVIES himself allows that they are unlikely all to have emerged in such a way. That said, I do not think it affects the main point I wish to make here if we concede the possibility that some of the later literature, influenced by the existence of works already in existence, may indeed have first been composed to act as 'written prophecy' – Haggai springs to mind. M.H. FLOYD, Prophecy and Writing in Habakkuk 2,1-5, ZAW 105, 1993, 462-9, argues that Hab 2:2 reflects an understanding of prophecy as written, but the narrative in 2:1 surely indicates that the book itself is not written prophecy *tout simple*, while the explanation in 2:3 suggests a very specific function for the writing-down of this oracle.

9 In general, such attributions seem intended to lend authority or to set works in a certain context. Even where speeches are presented with no other indication of their background, the attributions perform, in effect, a narrative function; they are often, though, linked to other narrative material in which the speaker figures as protagonist. Within the biblical literature, this is usually recognized as the general character of attributions in the wisdom literature and Song of Songs; the position in the Psalms is more complicated, but few would argue for genuine authorial attributions there, and the fictional attribution of speeches within the historical books is widely acknowledged, as is, say, the self-description of Deuteronomy as a Mosaic speech.

cast ancient literature in the form of speeches, and not only wonder how far this has in itself influenced the rise of our prophetic texts, but also seek to examine the often complicated situations to which this gives rise, as God speaks physically through a prophet who may also be presented as speaking with him. In short, these works must be considered not merely in terms of their relationship to prophecy, but also, no less importantly, in terms of their status as literary creations, in a broader literary culture.

One important aspect of this is the need for us to recognize that, as books, these works are intended to engage with a readership or audience. This is a point which has been made before about the tale of Jeremiah's loincloth, in 13:1-11, which surely addresses its message not to an audience contemporary with the prophet, but to the readers who encounter the story in the book of Jeremiah.[10] The point is applicable throughout the work however, and is integral to those approaches which recognize the Jeremiah of this text to be a literary creation, whatever his relationship to some original, historical figure. This might well imply that the character is wholly fictional, or at least based loosely around that figure – rather, say, as Claudius is in Robert Graves' novels. Even if every word and action recounted in the book of Jeremiah, however, was actually performed previously by a prophet Jeremiah, that represents no more than a constraint on the composition, and does not absolve us of the need to take seriously the book's presentation of the figure – to treat it, in other words, as though it were fictional. Whatever gains are offered by the old, historical/biographical approach to the prophets (and I am not convinced those gains are great), that approach effectively involves pillaging each book for details, and ignoring the way in which the book itself chooses to arrange,

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Elsewhere in the ancient Near East, there are some doubtful cases, but most literature is either anonymous or pseudonymous. The extent to which such pseudonymity was always recognized can be unclear, and the famous poem in praise of authors on Pap. Chester Beatty IV seems to combine such recognition in some cases with an acceptance of actual authorship in others. The explicit association of works with their real authors, however, is principally a characteristic of classical literature, which was, at best, unusual in earlier periods.

10 In his From Chaos to Covenant. Uses of Prohecy in the Book of Jeremiah, 1981, 131, ROBERT CARROLL suggested that this story could have been 'a parable (acted or spoken) or the report of vision … [which] might have involved the prophet in a set of dramatic actions; by the time of his Jeremiah, Old Testament Guides, 1989, 61, he preferred the idea that it was 'a literary parable which only existed in speech or writing without ever having had any realistic activity behind it. As PHILIP DAVIES says, more directly to the point, 'it is the report that carries the message'; cf. his The Audiences of Prophetic Scrolls: Some Suggestions, in: S.B. REID (ed.), Prophets and Paradigms. Essays in Honor of Gene M. Tucker, JSOTSS 229, 1996, 48-62, esp. 57-58.

present, and contextualize those details. Such reductionism is not only doomed to failure, if it overlooks the more tendentious aspects of the literary evidence, but it is also profoundly wasteful, discarding potentially important insights into the theology, history, and historical understanding of the context which produced each book. Although many factors may have been involved in creating Jeremiah and in its subsequent shaping, we may reasonably assume, at least, that none of the authors or redactors intended us to ignore their work and disassemble their text. If we are dealing with that book of Jeremiah, therefore, and not merely speculating about a historical Jeremiah, then we need to read the book as a book, and to treat its protagonist as the creature of its author or authors, who intend to convey meaning to us, as readers, through their portrayal of him.

Jeremiah offers a special case in respect of its composition, inasmuch as the book exists in two editions, both of which can probably be traced back as far as the textual evidence permits. This tends to lend weight to the previous point: whatever the history of the text, and whether the changes reflect a single redaction or some lengthier process, a great deal of effort has been put into both the re-writing and the re-arrangement of material. The fact that we cannot readily identify all the motives for such revision does not mean that there were none, and the trouble taken shows that matters of structure and expression were far from irrelevant, at least to the redactors. The textual situation, however, raises a further, final point to be borne in mind about Jeremiah as a book: its physical existence and transmission in that form.

Biblical scholarship has been inclined, in general, to take for granted the existence of the biblical books, often viewing them as, in some way, an inevitable crystallization of oral traditions, or the natural product of a literate society. We cannot, however, presume that levels of literacy were especially high in Judah, at least until much later than most of these works were composed, and we should not presume that any or all biblical literature relies on oral prototypes. As for the general emergence of books in a literate society, we should be aware that they each represent considerable effort and expense far beyond the labour of composition: the trouble entailed even in the production of each subsequent copy would have required considerable motivation. This is doubly true for a work so unusually long as Jeremiah: however much this work was subjected to later stages of redaction and expansion, it seems unlikely that it was ever a short book, with the potential for easy copying, distribution or memorization. We can only speculate about the context in which it was originally read, not least because we cannot be very specific about the date of composition, but general consider-

ations make it unlikely that the work existed in hundreds of copies from some early point, or that it was read by some significant proportion of the population. Just as its literary context is important for understanding Jeremiah, so also the physical constraints on production and circulation, which themselves tell against some casual antiquarianism, must be factored into any account of its purpose and historical context.

If we can only guess at how Jeremiah was originally read, or by whom, it is not unreasonable to suppose, all the same, that it was addressed primarily to those more privileged circles or strata of society which would have shared its strong political interests and recognized its own assumptions about the ready use of writing.[11] Within those circles or elsewhere, it may well have been performed or read out loud to an audience, rather than simply read by individuals: this was probably the case for much ancient literature, and would explain how sufficient initial distribution was achieved to stimulate an interest in the wider copying and ultimate popularity of a work. If so, the length of Jeremiah might have required several separate performances, a potential factor in the structuring of the work. More importantly, the possibility of such performance should guard against too literate a visualization of the work's subsequent history: we should not, perhaps, envisage early redaction of the book in terms of scribes busily revising manuscripts for the benefit of the next reader and copyist. Rather, it might be better to think of the early text as a script, subject to the sort of revisions, 'improvements', or simple errors which gave us, for instance, two versions of *King Lear*, and a whole host of text-critical problems surrounding dramatic texts, even those from an era of swift and ready printing. Again, we can only speculate, but the conditions and constraints on distribution, so very different from those which we take for granted now, must surely be included in any consideration of Jeremiah's redaction and transmission.

In short, there are some important insights and correctives to be gained by focusing less on Jeremiah as a source for historical prophecy, and more on Jeremiah as a text.

Although it revolves around the words and activities of a prophetic character, Jeremiah is not automatically thereby like every other book

11 Beyond some mention of writing by others (e.g. 8:8), Jeremiah shows particular interest in its own writtenness, and in acts of writing by the prophet (cf. 25:13; 30:2; 36; 45:1; 51:60). Important though these references are as an indication of the literate context which the book presupposes, it is also tempting to compare them with those places in some other ancient literature, such as the *Sayings of Neferti* or the *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* from Egypt, where the works offer a (fictional) account of their own form and existence, by explaining how the words of their protagonists came to be recorded in writing.

that does so, and important aspects of its character and composition are better elucidated by a consideration of other literature. 'Prophetic', in other words, is a simple and convenient designation of genre for certain purposes, not a fundamental definition of form or content. Correspondingly, we should not measure Jeremiah against some standard, 'averaged' model of a prophetic book, but explore its links with other, individual compositions, whether they are 'prophetic' or not. Further, we must disengage the composition of this literature from the actual practice of prophecy: prophetic books presume prophetic activity, but are not, at least for the most part, prophetic in function. At the same time, we must not confuse the literary portrayal of prophetic figures in such books with whatever historical figures they may be based on: to do so is to replace the books' presentations with our own speculative reconstructions, losing a lot to gain a little. Finally, Jeremiah and other works were produced in an era when the production and distribution of books was very different, and we must give more serious consideration to the constraints which such issues imposed upon the composition and transmission of texts. By all means, then, let us continue to use the label 'prophetic book' for this and other works; let us not, however, always allow an emphasis on 'prophetic' to obscure the importance of the word 'book'.

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